Daily Report

Latin America

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Cuba

Robaina Comments on Successor to Fidel Castro

FL0704144994 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 2300 GMT 6 Apr 94

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] Reporters were highly interested in the current leadership of Cuba and the future successor to Cuban President Fidel Castro. In response to this, Robaina stated that for a long time, every Cuban generation has participated in the People's Government, adding: We do not need to worry about a replacement for Fidel because Fidel, together with the Cuban people, the youth, and the not so young, is part of a project of development and change.

Other issues, like The Nation and the Emigre Community conference; the new impetus of Cuba's foreign policy; and Havana's possibilities for paying its debt to Montevideo were discussed by Robaina at this news conference, which concluded just minutes ago.

Robaina Holds News Conference in Montevideo

FL0704154494 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 0900 GMT 7 Apr 94

[Text] Cuban Foreign Minister Roberto Robaina said the great efforts of the Cuban people are aimed at increasing production and exports. In a news conference held in Montevideo, Uruguay, where he is carrying out an official visit, Robaina stressed that the Cuban Government decided to associate itself with foreign capital as an alternative for development in determined spheres such as tourism, oil, and nickel. Robaina added that Cuba's economic problems will not be solved with foreign investments alone.

In explaining the human rights issue, Robaina said that in Cuba there are no disappearances or tortured people. In contrast, Robaina highlighted that for some time now, every Cuban generation has participated in the government.

Robaina also held meetings with members of the Latin American Integration Association and with members of solidarity organizations with Cuba. In the latter, Robaina stated that Havana hopes to establish normal relations with Cuban emigres residing in 15 countries, and that the upcoming forum The Nation and the Emigre Community will help achieve just that.

Cuban Foreign Minister Robaina is carrying out a tour through Uruguay, Peru, Argentina and Paraguay aimed at expanding and strengthening the bilateral relations between Cuba and those South American states.

Says Summit Seeks 'To Isolate Cuba'

PY0704224494 Madrid EFE in Spanish 1431 GMT 7 Apr 94

[Text] Montevideo, 7 Apr (EFE)—During an interview with EFE in the Uruguayan capital, Cuban Foreign Minister Roberto Robaina said the America's Summit, called by U.S. President Bill Clinton for December in Miami, seeks "to isolate Cuba from Latin America." Robaina said: "If it is an 'America's Summit,' Cuba has earned a place there because, regardless of any different economic models, the summit will lack political plurality if we are excluded."

Robaina also discussed the upcoming Ibero-American Summit, scheduled for June in Cartagena de Indias (Colombia). He said Cuba hopes that "we, the American countries, will be able to meet without receiving orders from the United States." Robaina added: "Cuba hopes the Cartagena Summit will issue resolutions and not merely express intentions as in the past three summits."

The upcoming Ibero-American Summit is one of the goals of the Cuban Foreign Minister's three-day official visit to Uruguay and will be a goal of the visits he will subsequently make to Peru, Argentina, and Paraguay within a "political-economical offensive" as he described it himself.

The Cuban Government hopes to receive more concrete support from the Ibero-American Summit against the U.S. trade "blockade" on Cuba. The foreign minister added: "It is not necessary to ask for (Latin American) political support against the blockade because we already have it. Now this support must be translated into investments."

Nevertheless, the quest for these investments during Robaina's current tour is of "a preparatory nature," without hopes for concrete results. "Until we honor our debts to these countries there will be an atmosphere that does not contribute to striking more significant relations," Robaina said.

Cuba owes about $1.2 billion to Argentina and $33 million to Uruguay. The foreign minister said the Cuban Government intends to reduce these debts by delivering goods (specially medicines) and, above all, by getting the creditors to invest in Cuba.

Concerning his subsequent stops, Robaina noted he already has a confirmed meeting with Argentine President Carlos Menem, a Latin American leader who has been very critical of the government system in Cuba. A meeting with Peruvian President Alberto Fujimori has still not been confirmed. A meeting with Paraguayan President Juan Carlos Wasmosy is much more complex because there are no diplomatic relations between Paraguay and Cuba and, therefore, Robaina's visit to this country is unofficial.

Robaina emphasized: "During this tour, my task involves explaining to the respective presidents the current Cuban situation, which is extremely complex. At this moment, our top priority involves finding an economic model that will allow us to integrate ourselves into today's world without giving up our political system's sacred achievements."

In Montevideo, the Cuban foreign minister met President Luis Alberto Lacalle and Foreign Minister Sergio Abreu. Although his official visit ended on 6 April, Robaina will stay in Montevideo, on a private visit, until 8 April.

The Uruguayan politicians did not make any remarks on the meetings, even though both of them openly expressed their government's position, favoring a democratic opening of the Cuban system that will allow its integration into Latin America by reconciling its government system with those prevailing in the rest of the continent.

UN Envoy Says Development Best Way to Peace

FL0704155294 Havana Radio Progreso Network in Spanish 1130 GMT 6 Apr 94

[Text] On 5 April at the United Nations, Cuba reaffirmed that there is no better way to promote, maintain, and consolidate peace than by encouraging development and giving such development stability worldwide. Abelardo Moreno, Cuban representative on the special committee on UN peacekeeping operations, warned that if that fundamental element was not taken into account, with or without a Cold War, with or without an East-West confrontation, conflicts would continue to proliferate and become increasingly dangerous.

Moreno predicted: Then, the United Nations will continue to be drawn into an upward-spiraling tendency to resort to weapons and militarism that will erode its credibility and ruin the philosophy that gave rise to the United Nations itself. He reflected: Those who believed the end of the Cold War was the universal cure-all for solving problems accumulated over centuries forgot that erecting solid foundations for development and promoting economic and social progress for all constitute the very raison d'etre for the collective security system provided for in the UN Charter.

GRANMA Notes U.S. Acknowledgment of Drug Efforts

FL0704224094 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1700 GMT 7 Apr 94

[Text] For the third time in the last three years, the U.S. Government has acknowledged Cuba's serious efforts and efficiency in the antidrug-trafficking struggle in or near the island's territorial waters and airspace. This means that the truth about Cuba is prevailing.

In an article published on 7 April, GRANMA journalists Leon Nicanor Cotayo mentions the specific dates of the U.S. State Department reports on this issue: 7 March 1991, 12 April 1993, and 4 April 1994. It is interesting how in the last report, the U.S. Government notes that Cuba's efforts against drug trafficking have not been more extensive because of the effects of the more than 30-year-old U.S. blockade. In this regard, the document states that the shortage of fuel and essential spare parts somewhat limits the Cuban Government's capabilities to intercept drug traffickers.

Leon Cotayo adds that Miami's far right and other conservative sectors in the United States frequently unleash smear campaigns, tying Cuba to drug trafficking. This is the third communique issued by the U.S. State Department, which once again putting objectivity before any propagandistic defamation, seems to add an element of significant value to anyone pondering the seriousness of Cuba's arguments when it comes to explaining its actions, or when it comes to repudiating those who around the clock, try to distort Cuba's reality.

Antigua, Barbuda Establish Diplomatic Ties

FL0704153194 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 2300 GMT 6 Apr 94

[Text] On 6 April, documents were signed at Cuba's permanent UN mission ratifying the establishment of diplomatic relations between Cuba and the government of the islands of Antigua and Barbuda. In a brief address, Cuban UN Ambassador Fernando Remirez de Estenoz stated that this is of extreme importance if Cuba wishes to join the Caribbean community of peoples.

Almeida Receives Ghanaian Ambassador

FL0804014294 Havana Cuba Vision Network in Spanish 0000 GMT 8 Apr 94

[Text] In a solemn ceremony, Commander of the Revolution Juan Almeida Bosque, vice president of the Council of State, received His Excellency (Augustus Kuesi Yankey), who presented his credentials as Ghana's extraordinary and plenipotentiary ambassador to Cuba. Foreign Vice Minister Isabel Allende was also in attendance.

The Ghanaian ambassador was accompanied by advisers (Francis A. Segat), and (Paul Wenton Keshirt).

Mitsubishi Official Interviewed on Marketing Plans

FL0704234094 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1700 GMT 7 Apr 94

[Text] The Mitsubishi Corporation recently announced it will enter the Cuban market and formalize its presence in Cuba. Martin Rodin, president of Mitsubishi Motors in Cuba, was interviewed by Mariela Diaz.

[Begin recording] [Rodin] We have been working in Cuba for almost 14 years. Mitsubishi's decision came after eight months of work. This decision encompasses more than importing and selling vehicles. Once the decision to enter the Cuban market was made, the Japanese sent a work group to Cuba to examine all technical aspects involving the vehicles.

[Diaz] What types of vehicles will you be marketing?

[Rodin] The automobile will be the Lancer. They will be used, for now, as rental cars for tourism. There is also a great demand for diesel engine box vans, minibuses for 12 and 26 passengers. Following today's or tomorrow's signing of the contract with Transimport (as heard), we will begin to import a full line of trucks, both medium and heavy load. [end recording]

Pedro Ross: May Day Celebrations Too Costly

FL0704154794 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1700 GMT 6 Apr 94

[Text] Cuban Workers Federation Secretary General Pedro Ross Leal has announced that there will be people's marches on the occasion of 1 May only in the municipalities of Pinar del Rio, Artemisa, and Matanzas and in one of the two capitals of Havana Province [sentence as heard]. Here is journalist Diosdado Maso with further details on the 1 May celebrations:

[Begin Maso recording] Ross explained that the reason the marches of the militant Cuban people are not being held in both the capital and municipalities is the economic situation the country is going through. How can we hold ceremonies when there are workplaces and sugar mills that need the labor force and the resources we might use in holding such ceremonies? Ross gave the construction of the two grandstands at the national ceremony held every year in Revolution Square as an example. He said just one of these grandstands uses up more than seven cubic meters of wood, without counting the nails, the fuel, the fabric—in short, great expense.

Concerning the political justification for not holding the march of the militant Cuban people here in the capital, Ross said that holding the special session of the National Assembly, where the suggestions made by the workers during the Parliaments in the Workplace were discussed, is the best acknowledgement of the Cuban trade-union movement by its government and its people. [end recording]

Lezcano Stresses 'Preventive Nature' of Giron-94

FL0704161694 Havana Radio Progreso Network in Spanish 1130 GMT 6 Apr 94

[Text] The Giron-94 exercise of the Unified Vigilance and Protection System [SUVP], which began on 5 April in Havana City, is an important tool in confronting crime and antisocial behavior. Jorge Lezcano, first secretary of the Communist Party of Cuba in Havana City, underscored the preventive nature of these tasks which are aimed at fighting social indiscipline and crime. In the 15 municipalities, the provincial commission of the SUVP will inspect marketplaces, supermarkets, hospitals, childcare centers, food warehouses, cold storage centers, and factories to learn how theft and embezzlement are being fought in those centers.

Giron-94 will be held in Havana throughout the week and includes energetic actions against clandestine restaurants, whorehouses [candongas], and those who rent cars to foreigners around tourist facilities, among other illegal activities.

Alarcon, ANPP Leadership Visit Granma Province

FL0704205594 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1700 GMT 7 Apr 94

[Text] Ricardo Alarcon, president of the National Assembly of the People's Government [ANPP], has stressed the great efforts by the people of Granma in confronting the current situation, and their profound patriotic and revolutionary faith. Alarcon and other ANPP leaders participated in a three-day visit to the province, along with seven of its work commissions, to inspect preparations for the forthcoming report the province will render to the ANPP.

[Begin Alarcon recording] [Words indistinct] I must stress that beyond a doubt, if we seek that part of Cuba where the roots, heart, and struggle of the fatherland have been alive for over 120 years, we must immediately think of the Cuban region we today call Granma Province.

Here one finds many people aware of the progress report process, aware of what is being done in this regard. It is a stimulus, something that helps boost the tasks conducted by the provincial organizations, things they were doing anyhow. This process, however, helps to give a certain impetus to the entire collective effort. [end recording]

The ANPP presidency stressed the fact that in Granma, over 500 low-cost houses have been built of a semester plan for 1,000, and the fact that the province has confirmed it will fulfill its current sugar production plan.

Journalists Discuss Hard Currency

FL0704204094 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1600 GMT 4 Mar 94

["Straight Talk" program with host Osvaldo Rodriguez and guest Luis Sexto of BOHEMIA magazine—live or recorded]

[Text] [Rodriguez] There are limits to rounding up foreign currency inside Cuba: the population's sensibilities. We, Luis Sexto of the magazine BOHEMIA and Osvaldo Rodriguez of the newspaper JUVENTUD REBELDE, are going to talk about this today. Well, Luis, I think this is a subject that is out in the streets. I think that many of us—in family gatherings and among friends—have discussed this subject, what is for sale in certain stores within the network of stores that sell for hard currency, and about the way certain Cuban businessmen, who are seeking hard currency for the Cuban people, handle this matter.

I think we should talk about this. We could delve more deeply into certain topics, and also into the intentions, but I think intentions have always been noble. As I said upon opening the program, I think a limit must be set, and that limit is to try to avoid offending the population's sensibilities. I wouldn't even say "try": the population's sensibilities simply must not be offended.

[Sexto] I think, Osvaldo, that the limit has already been set, unless the news I have is false. You are referring to the fact that recently, in certain places, especially in the capital, certain medicines were being sold; in others, certain light foods, candies, sweets; even school uniforms came to be sold in certain hard currency stores. Of course this represented a huge contradiction, which was subsequently quickly caught and repudiated by the population.

[Rodriguez] But you are speaking to me in the past tense. It makes it sound as if all that is over.

[Sexto] Well, I understand that such a thing was not a government decision. I mean, you have to keep in mind that in this country, contrary to what some people both inside and outside the country think, power is shared. In Cuba, power is shared. But because of the cliches that have been established by propaganda, people always think that anything that happens in this country is a decision made at the highest level of government or by the [Communist] Party [of Cuba]. People do not take into account the fact that in this country, precisely, power is so widely shared, so broadly distributed, that there is enough margin for a businessman or an administrator at some store to take certain initiatives that are often not the most felicitous.

I have sometimes wished, precisely, that that power were concentrated—which does not mean centralization: wished to have a concentrated power capable of making decisions, decisions which would be obeyed, complied with, by everyone at once.

Now, I understand that when the government learned about these things, the situation returned to normal and such sales were prohibited, disallowed.

[Rodriguez] Well, yes, I think so. I believe you have mentioned a number of cases that were prohibited. And, well, I am thinking particulary about the sweet snacks for children, and certain essential medicines that were being sold for hard currency, but did not, at that particular moment, exist in the hospitals or the pharmacies of the people's network. However, I think there are other things that do a lot of damage to that image as well, and that contrary to what we meant to do—give businessmen some autonomy—we are realizing that certain businessmen, when given autonomy, do not know what to do with it, and begin taking initiatives that are irritating.

In principle, we defend autonomy, and could discuss this in another program. We would have to draw the conclusion that ... [rephrases] in my opinion, the efficiency of our economy entails autonomy on the part of the enterprises in the economic sphere, to be precise.

[Sexto] I agree.

[Rodriguez] That's on the one hand. Now, I think that when our businessmen and administrators are given autonomy and don't know what to do with it, it is because they are still suffering the influence of a bureaucratic mentality to the maximum.

It seems to me that the other day—last week, if my memory serves me right—Renato Recio touched on the subject of bureaucracy and the bureaucratic mentality on this very program. He reached the conclusion that bureacracy means losing sight of the end goal.

As I was saying just a few moments ago, recalling Comrade Renato Recio: When a process has lost sight of its end goal, it has become bureaucratized. That means that its entire point has been lost, that the thing is being done for no reason at all. It is at that point that the purpose for which that action was created, founded, begun is forgotten, and the action gets so far off course that everything becomes distorted, and the man carrying out that action no longer knows when he is taking proper action and when he is taking improper action—despite the fact that he may have the best of intentions. We could also talk about up to what point those intentions already... [rephrases] are good intentions. Well, intentions are intentions. It is said that the road to Hell is paved with good intentions.

[Sexto] Indeed, with good intentions. Now, I want to tell you that, regardless of how flexible the economy and economic and political management in this country may become, and regardless of how much autonomy we may be able to give our institutions and enterprises, we must never allow ourselves to cease acting as political beings.

The society, this particular society, this regime, the socialist regime—at least the kind of socialism we in this country want to build—can never be separated from the political vision of those who lead it. I mean: I cannot round up hard currency at any cost. I have... [rephrases] the country needs to round up hard currency. Indeed, the country has needed... [rephrases] very clearly, it has taken initiatives that, although... [rephrases] These initiatives may have bothered us in the beginning because we saw or anticipated that certain inequalities could arise. We could also see, however, that they were necessary, that the nation was (?sunken) in an extremely critical situation and needed to make bold decisions that could alleviate our situation.

I think time has shown that the decision taken has been the right one. Decriminalizing hard currency has helped, somewhat, to alleviate certain tensions in the country.

Now of course we must not lose sight of the fact that no management decision, administrative decision, can be allowed to aggravate the possible irritation over the fact that some people have access to hard currency while

others do not. I mean that must not be allowed to be an ostensibly hurtful act. Of course, we cannot sell a medicine [for hard currency] because medicine is a political product. We cannot sell a medicine in one place for Cubans who possess hard currency and not sell it in a pharmacy where it can be bought in Cuban pesos.

[Rodriguez] We must remind listeners that among the pillars, one of the major foundations of this Revolution is public health. Even under today's critical conditions, while it does have deficiencies, public health is still free to the population, and no one has yet died... [rephrases] there is not a single person who can say: A hospital has failed to provide care for me.

[Sexto] Indeed. Look, because of its social import, its human import, medicine is an eminently political product—in addition to everything else that it is, which I am not going to get into defining here.

[Rodriguez] Of course.

[Sexto] And whoever sells medicine has to keep in mind, above all, its political implications. It would be... [rephrases] I think it is unjust from the very foundation for us to allow the absence of a medicine on the national currency market, but allow it on the hard currency market.

[Rodriguez] Especially those medicines... [rephrases] for example, asthma medicines. I remember that that was one of the cases most talked about—the fact that there was a spray [preceding word in English] for asthma on certain markets. And asthmatic people, at a period when... [rephrases] Everyone knows that this time of year, winter, with its constant cold fronts, is a time when asthma sufferers experience many attacks. Asthma sufferers did not have that medicine available to them—and I think that was a very serious mistake on the part of whoever made that decision. I think that, as you say, it was probably some administrator, maybe some director of one of the many enterprises supplying this network of stores, because no single enterprise does it. Several enterprises service this network of stores.

[Sexto] Osvaldo, in order to avoid becoming bureaucratic, to avoid repeating hollow, harmful schemes, the first thing an official has to do is not lose sight of the social purpose of all his actions—at least in our society.

[Rodriguez] Of course.

[Sexto] I mean: Why do I want to round up hard currency? What goal am I pursuing (?in rounding up) hard currency? The end established in this country, of course, is a noble one, a noble end.

[Rodriguez] We—Luis Sexto, of BOHEMIA, and Osvaldo Rodriguez of JUVENTUD REBELDE—are discussing the matter of rounding up hard currency inside Cuba. We have already established the limit: not to offend the population's sensibilities.

[Sexto] Indeed, that is the basic boundary. How far should the manager's, administrator's, action go? To what extent can management, or commercial flexibility and initiative be positive? At what point does it begin to be negative? At what point does it become impolitic? At what point does it begin to cause irritation on the part of our citizens because of the shortages they are already being affected by?

[Rodriguez] Of course this—all these attitudes—is also to a certain extent related to the so-called depoliticizing of the economy. I think that yes, one can to a certain extent speak of economics alone, without relation to politics. When those economics are put into practice, however... [rephrases] I mean: You can talk about ideas, and about economic laws that operate independently of will or of the social system. However, when you go looking for that economy's end goal, that is when politics merges with economics, and that is where these businessmen have to act, taking into account not only economic ideas—the ideas of businessmen—but also political ideas.

[Sexto] I think what you are saying is obvious: In a society based on social justice—that is, equitable distribution of wealth and a standard of security for all—indidputably, for the majority of the population, economics can never be divorced from politics. I think that is one of the many taboos that have arisen recently in certain places in the world; and, in fact, we already know where such a divorce—that artificial divorce between economics and politics—is leading. Socialist societies are profoundly humane societies, and in my opinion, politics is nothing more than the art of getting human beings to live together in harmony. Therefore, we cannot forget the political implications of all our economic actions. That is what I am talking about, Osvaldo. However, I think that we also have to talk about other things here, in the few moments left to us.

I think there are many Cubans who indeed may have hard currency available to them today, for one reason or another. But I also think that those Cubans who today have access to—or rather, the right to use—that hard currency must try to be very careful not to offend the sensibilities of their fellow citizens, because that problem too is occurring. We are not going to criticize, here on our program, only officials who, by making certain decisions, have made a mistake. I think that this society must also seek harmony on the basis of us, ourselves, on the basis of each and every one of its members. I know, for example, of schools where compared to the snack of *a child whose family receives hard* currency, the snack of a child whose family doesn't, is awful. I mean: Although we have had to accept these relationships because of the situation, because of the circumstances, let us at least not make them worse by using... [rephrases] vanities that are, in the last analysis, puerile vanities, vanities that try to create artificial differences. In the last analysis, this country was founded for us all, and we must all contribute our share so we can manage to live together in social harmony.

I believe—and continue to repeat—that at the present time, morality is far more important than under any other circumstances. In times of crisis, morality is fundamental. And that is what I am talking about right now, Osvaldo. I am saying that we must try not to be ostentatious.

[Rodriguez] To avoid offending the sensibilities of the population—that is the boundary to keep in mind in rounding up hard currency inside Cuba.

I think that we have spoken out quite clearly on this matter, Luis Sexto of the magazine BOHEMIA and I, Osvaldo Rodriguez of JUVENTUD REBELDE.

Luis, all that is left for us to say to our listeners is that we should continue talking about this subject. I don't think we have exhausted this topic here. We could discuss it further in later programs.

Roundup of Economic Activity

FL0804014994

[Editorial Report] The following is a compilation of fileworthy reports on economic developments in Cuba carried on Havana radio and television in Spanish between 5 and 7 April.

Radio Rebelde at 0900 on 5 April reports that sugar workers in matanzas province have completed the planting of 500 caballerias of sugarcane. Their goal is to plant more than 2,000 caballerias by the end of the year.

Radio Rebelde also reports that the combatants of the Western Division of the Antiaircraft Defense and Revolutionary Air Force and Specialized troops of the Revolutionary Armed Forces concluded their mobilization in Havana with outstanding achievements in the potato harvest and other agricultural tasks. The contingent that worked in San Antonio de los Banos received the banner for being the best military force in the miscellaneous crops.

Radio Progreso at 1100 GMT on 5 April reports that the International Red Cross made a donation valued at more than $500,000 for families affected by the intense rainfall of last November in Guantanamo. The donation consists of personal hygiene products and household goods, as well as food for rural hospitals, retirement homes, and other institutions.

Tele Rebelde and Cuba Vision at 0000 GMT on 5 April reports that the longest bridge built over the sea in Cuba is in Villa Clara. The bridge is 350 meters long and 750 meters high. This bridge, which rests on 156 concrete pillars, has a feature allowing ships to pass under it, as well as an exchange of waters so that the ecology of the area is not affected.

Havana Radio Reloj at 1934 GMT on 5 April reports that Matanzas' agroindustrial complexes planted 179 caballerias of sugarcane in the month of March.

Radio Rebelde at 0900 GMT on 6 April reports that the 1,800 Western Army troops participating in 'Operation Giron' harvested over 550,000 quintals of potatoes and other agricultural products in Havana Province in just 26 days, whereas they had been expected to harvest that amount in 46 days.

In the same newscast, Rebelde's Cienfuegos correspondent reports that cane recovery seems to be going well in the province: The local Agriculture Ministry representative says that 143 caballerias have been planted in the province to date, 137 percent of the figure planned for the first 90 days of 1994. There are 67 caballerias of cane left to plant in this month's plan, and the province expects to plant them with no problem. The province expects to have 1,296 caballerias planted in sugarcane by the end of June.

Radio Rebelde at 1700 GMT on 6 April reports that over 500 caballerias of sugarcane have been planted in Matanzas Province and that another 180 caballerias are ready for planting. The spring planting program comprises 2,000 caballerias.

Rebelde adds that 308 tons of fish was harvested by fish farmers in Las Tunas Province, surpassing their first-quarter goal by 30 percent, an improvement over last year.

Rebelde also adds that the potato harvest in Havana Province is 60 percent complete, thanks to good organization and higher productivity of the work force.

Radio Rebelde on at 1700 GMT on 7 April reports that in Sanctis Spiritus Province, the Uruguay Agroindustrial Complex will add 150 sugarcane cutters to their Basic Cooperative Production Units during this decisive month in which they hope to increase their grinding and efficiency production.

Rebelde adds that in Holguin Province, the 60th Aniversario de la Revolucion de Octubre enterprise has built a new version of the KTP-2 sugarcane harvester, which is being tested in the fields of the Urbano Noris Agroindustrial Complex in that same province.

Criminal, Judicial Action Roundup

FL0704161494

[Editorial Report] The following is a compilation of fileworthy reports on criminal activity and related judicial actions carried on Havana radio and television in Spanish between 22 March and 6 April.

Radio Rebelde at 0000 GMT on 22 March reports that Case No. 441 of the Havana City Provincial Court involving 17 people arrested in connection with the illegal sale of special gas vouchers in Havana has concluded and all 17 defendants are awaiting sentencing. The defendants stole special gas vouchers from Las Tunas Province and sold them in Havana City. Juan Saucedo, an employee of the provincial office of the Cuban Petroleum Institute in Las Tunas Province, stole

vouchers for over 68,000 liters of gasoline. Several doctors, an engineer, and an accountant were arrested along with Saucedo for their involvement in the matter of the stolen vouchers.

Radio Progreso at 1200 GMT on 23 March reports that according to statistics, cattle rustling has reached 32 percent of overall crimes committed in the country in 1993. An example of this is that more than 5,000 incidents of cattle rustling were recorded last year in the Province of Havana, the province with the most cattle.

Radio Progreso at 1100 GMT on 6 April reports that 55,000 pesos were stolen from a construction enterprise in Havana City. Two administrators, Ernesto Sanhernandez and Fernando Flores Alfonso Tamayo, were accused of tampering with the payroll. They used names of students on false payrolls and later forged their signatures to collect their checks. The two suspects are in jail waiting for their trial. They could get 8-20 years imprisonment for their crime.

Dominican Republic

Government Rejects U.S. Letter on Embargo Violation

PA0804141094 Paris AFP in Spanish 2238 GMT 7 Apr 94

[Text] Santo Domingo, 7 Apr (AFP)—This Thursday, Fabio Herrera, Dominican deputy secretary of state of foreign relations, described the letter by 48 U.S. legislators urging President Joaquin Balaguer to prevent the UN and OAS embargo against the Haitian military regime from being violated as a "verbal threat." The Dominican Republic and Haiti share the Caribbean island of Hispaniola.

Herrera "categorically" rejected the terms used in the letter and suggested that "Dominican political sectors" whom he did not identify could be behind the note. He did clarify, however, that the opposition candidates preparing to participate in the 10 May elections are not behind the letter. He indicated that the language used in the note "seems to be more political because these are not diplomats making the demand but pressure groups resorting to any language."

The deputy foreign minister indicated that the letter's tone "is not that which is normally used in diplomatic relations between the Dominican Republic and the United States, which are generally conveyed through the U.S. Embassy." The letter said "it would be tragic if our productive and friendly relations were undermined by your government's lack of willingness or inability to fully implement the embargo against Haiti."

The U.S. legislators stated contraband gasoline is moving from the Dominican Republic to Haiti, and they said that "fuel is being taken across the border by hand and in boats and trucks." The legislators' note also states that amount of fuel crossing the border has increased "despite the embargo."

This Thursday in Caracas, Claudette Werleigh, foreign minister of deposed President Jean Bertrand Aristide, stated nearly 2,000 gallons of gasoline cross the Dominican-Haitian land border every day. The gasoline is later sold on the Haitian "black market" at prices ranging from $15 to $18 per liter. The Dominican press has consistently reported, even with photographs, this fuel operation shows coordinated activity between both countries' militaries.

In one of the note's most aggressive passages, the U.S. legislators indicate that "this flagrant, massive violation of the embargo cannot be condoned." They stress to Balaguer that it is "imperative that your country end the Haitian embargo violation. These violations undermine international efforts to isolate the coupist regime and pressure it into reestablishing President Aristide's elected civilian government." The signatories are all members of President Bill Clinton's Democratic party. Heading the list is Joseph Kennedy II, a member of the famous U.S. dynasty.

Haiti

Fuel Shortage Reported in Dominican Cities

FL0704223194 Port-au-Prince Signal FM Radio in French 1030 GMT 7 Apr 94

[Text] There is already a shortage of oil products in the southwest Dominican Republic. The people in the border cities of the southwest of the Dominican Republic have been deprived of fuel for several days due to the flourishing trafficking of oil products with Haiti, according to what the correspondent for the Haitian press agency in Santo Domingo has seen. This situation has paralyzed the enterprises in several Dominican cities, including Duverger, (Villard), Ragua, Neyba, Galvan, Tamayo, and Vicente Noble. Besides, numerous Dominicans, who went to these cities for Holy Week, have not been able to return to the cities from which they came due to lack of transportation.

Dominican President Joaquin Balaguer, whose regime is accused of violating the sanctions imposed on Haiti, stated on 2 April, during an electoral tour of Romana city, that his government was employing all necessary efforts to definitively control smuggling at the Haitian-Dominican border. The ban on smuggling is part of a new strategy aimed at restoring democracy in Haiti, said the Dominican head of state.

The announcement of these measures was made following the visit to Santo Domingo last week of U.S. Senator Christopher Dodd, who told President Balaguer about the the United States' concern over the increasing violation of human rights in Haiti.

Daily Denounces Fuel Smuggling

FL0704220094 Port-au-Prince Signal FM Radio in French 1030 GMT 7 Apr 94

[Excerpt] On 6 April, the Dominican newspaper EL DIARIO denounced the smuggling of oil products

between the Dominican Republic and Haiti, which is being done extensively, according to the newspaper. A reporter of the daily confirmed that transactions between Haitians and Dominicans are made daily in homes, located not far from the border between the two countries, where the products are stored. The trafficking of fuel and other products affected by the international embargo is done for the profit of the Haitian military regime, according to the Dominican daily. The article points out that in Dajabon, a region located 350 km northeast of Santo Domingo, a gallon of gasoline is sold for 55 Dominican pesos, that is, $5; whereas the regular price is 20 pesos, or $1.50. [passage omitted]

Nerette Claims To Be 'Constitutional President'

FL0704215994 Port-au-Prince Signal FM Radio in French 1030 GMT 7 Apr 94

[Text] I am still the president of Haiti. This is a statement by Justice Joseph Nerette on the afternoon of 7 April during a news briefing at his home. Hoping to ignore the parliamentary decree restoring President Aristide to his post, Justice Nerette said several times: I am the constitutional president of Haiti.

[Begin recording] [Nerette] Once again, I have not tendered my resignation.

[Unidentified journalist] For the time being, you consider yourself the president of the Republic of Haiti even though the parliamentarians restored President Aristide to his post?

[Nerette] I am the constitutional president of the Republic of Haiti. Do you want me to repeat the same thing again and again?

[Journalist] Mr. Nerette....

[Nerette, interrupting] I think that is all, gentlemen.

[Journalist] One small question.

[Nerette] No, no, not half a question.

[Journalist Rotschild Francois] Why [do you make] these statements today when you kept silent for a long time?

[Nerette] I have the right to say nothing. Are you contesting my right to say nothing?

[Journalist Patrick Eliancy] Anyway, there is a [word indistinct], there are actions undertaken by the Revolutionary Front for the Promotion and Progress of Haiti [FRAPH], the Mobilization for National Development [MDN], the Group of Citizens of the Greater North [CCGN], and the Action Committee for National Reconciliation [CARENA] for the disentanglement of the crisis....

[Francois, interrupting] Do you support this initiative by FRAPH, CARENA, MDN, and CCGN to try to establish a new government in the country?

[Nerette] I have already said that the country is in danger. They can call on a—I would even say—honest, loyal, and worthy citizen....

[Journalist, interrupting] Have they called you?

[Nerette] Whether they have or not, I am president.

[Francois] But, Mr. Nerette, how can you explain that you are not at the National Palace?

[Journalist] Must one be at the National Palace to be president? Namphy was [words indistinct]. He refused to sit at the National Palace. He said that his office is in the barracks [previous six words in Creole: se kay jon nan'k kay li]. You have forgotten all that. [end recording]

Aristide Notes Treaty Expiration; Rejects U.S. Plan

FL0704175494 Port-au-Prince Radio Metropole in French 1045 GMT 7 Apr 94

[Text] On 6 Aprio, President-in-exile Jean-Bertrand Aristide denounced in an official letter the agreement signed with the United States in 1981 on refugees. He did so to protest the systematic return by the United States to Haiti of those who want to leave the country. This agreement constitutes the legal basis of U.S. Coast Guard efforts to systematically return Haitian refugees who attempt to enter the United States.

Mr. Michael Barnes added that President-in-exile Jean-Bertrand Aristide also gave notice of his refusal of the latest plan for a settlement to the crisis in Haiti. U.S. Vice President Al Gore presented the plan to the president last month. Father Aristide considers unacceptable the American proposal to lift the sanctions before his return to Haiti as head of state.

The American policy is a perversion of democracy, says the letter to President Bill Clinton from the Haitian president, who has lived in exile since 1991. The letter points out that in any case the 1981 convention concerning the refugees expires in six months.

It should be recalled that the American policy regarding the Haitian refugees is based on the presumption that the refugees are not fleeing persecution, which is unbelievable, writes President Aristide. He reproaches Mr. Bill Clinton for having taken on the responsibility for the policy of his Republican predecessor George Bush, who began to send back Haitian refugees in 1992.

DeRonceray Discusses Application of Article 149

FL0704213794 Port-au-Prince Radio Metropole in French 1045 GMT 6 Apr 94

[Text] Wednesday, 6 April, should mark a step in the opposition's attempt to implement Article 149 of the Constitution. Rothschild Francois has a report:

[Begin recording] [Francois] What is certain is that the day appears extremely decisive for the Coordinating

Committee for National Mobilization, which is seeking installation of a new power in Haiti. The fate of this resolution bill submitted to parliament will perhaps be known today. As a matter of fact, the members of the committee that groups FRAPH [Revolutionary Front for the Promotion and Progress of Haiti], MDN [Mobilization for National Development], CARENA [Action Committee for National Reconciliation] and other political formations are due to be received by the conference of presidents in the Chamber of Deputies. For MDN leader Hubert de Ronceray, the meeting represenets a step forward within the framework of actions taken by the Coordinating Comittee.

[DeRonceray] We think this is an important step and we hope that something encouraging for the country comes out of this meeting.

[Francois] Do you support application of Article 149 of the Constitution?

[DeRonceray] Yes. Naturally, for us, all the conditions are fufilled right now, so that Article 149 of the Constitution is applicable. It is therefore up to our lawmakers to assume their responsibilities, fulfill their duties, and respond to the expectations and aspirations of the majority.

[Francois] Article 149 meaning Judge Nerette, or the president of the Court of Cassation, Attorney Jonassaint?

[DeRonceray] We think that the constitutional principle must prevail. There are two interpretations of Article 149: an interpretation favoring the president of the Court of Cassation, and another favoring the 8 October 1991 government, which would mean Judge Nerette. For us in MDN, what is important is for constitutional principle to triumph. Whichever interpretation prevails, we will accept it because what is important for us is that the country be endowed with a government capable of restoring order to this country's life and of finally endowing Haiti with a stable government capable of promoting development, progress, and peace.

[Francois] Asked about the attitude of the international community regarding this anti-Aristide initiative, Hubert de Ronceray thinks that it is more than time for Haitians to take responsibility by emerging from this stalemate. He also points out that the international community is aware of its mistakes in managing Haiti. That is why, according to DeRonceray, it is important to move in the right direction.

[DeRonceray] It is certain that during the early days, the international community will not be enthusiastic. As soon as the new government shows discipline, competence, and seriousness, however, there is no doubt that the international community will be sensitive to such demonstrations and will tend to change their attitude toward us. [end recording]

Invites Deputies To Install 'New Power'

FL0704223094 Port-au-Prince Radio Metropole in French 1600 GMT 7 Apr 94

[Text] Professor Hubert de Ronceray, leader of the Mobilization for National Development, MDN, reacting to the cancellation of a conference with the presidents of the political blocs in the lower chamber, still believes it is up to the legislators to fill the institutional vacuum. The MDN leader, member of the Coordinating Committee, invites the legislators to cooperate in the installation of a new power.

[Begin recording] [De Ronceray] I believe that the joint resolution is very clear. It says very clearly that we support a constitutional solution with application of Article 149 of the Constitution. But in case parliament refuses to follow up this constitutional demand, then parliament will be responsible for all favorable or unfavorable reactions that result from this refusal. We are therefore very sorry to see that those who are in charge of the defense of this country's Constitution, those who are mandated by the people to defend their rights, are threatening to drop the Constitution as they did so many times, but are also threatening to hasten the chaos. We hope that good sense will finally prevail. We invite all those in parliament, in the Chamber of Deputies and in the Senate, who still have minimal respect for this country, to accept their responsibilities and defend, tooth-and-nail, what is left of law and duty for senators and deputies.

[Francois] If the situation persists, are you going to give up, or are you going to pursue the fight by developing new strategies?

[De Ronceray] The fight must continue until a solution is found to the crisis. Because right now, I think that we are facing a national tragedy. There are seven million men and women who can no longer resist. There are seven million men and women who are asking the political authorities to show that they are still real men and women. I think it is our duty to continue the fight until the truth is respected and implemented. [end recording]

Legislator Says Deputies 'Deaf to Threats'

FL0704182894 Port-au-Prince Signal FM Radio in French 1030 GMT 7 Apr 94

[Passages in italics in Creole]

[Excerpts] The Coordinating Committee [for National Mobilization, CCMN] is at a deadlock. The Conference of Presidents at the Chamber of Deputies has resisted the pressures of this committee. We are deaf to threats, stated Mr. Frantz Robert Monde. Those men have no program, no plan for the future, he proclaimed. The following is a report by Daly Valet.

[Begin recording] [Valet] *On Wednesday, 6 April, the ultimatum of the CCMN expired. There was surprise as*

the committee did not go into action as they had threatened to do in the event that the parliamentarians did not ratify their plan for an ad hoc government. Anyway, we must say this matter was debated by the Conference of Presidents at the Chamber of Deputies on the morning of 6 April. The results and decisions are the following: the Conference is prepared not to receive the delegation of the mobilization committee even if they go to the parliament. If we are to trust Monde's explanations, the bloc presidents will make their positions known in a letter they will send to the CCMN on 8 April.

[Monde] These men decided not to meet with this delegation and to write them back instead. This letter will be ready....[pauses] We are discussing it; this letter will be sent to them on 8 April. Anyway, the press will have a copy of it.

[Valet] *The president of the Chamber of Deputies stated that he does not allow himself to be intimidated by pressure and that pressure will not make him obey. The president explained that the deputies remain committed to the parliamentary plan they passed in the Chamber of Deputies at the beginning of March. Monde added they had not rejected the CCMN's ad hoc government plan, but a small group of people cannot think that they can take power to defend their personal interests. Besides, wonders Frantz Robert Monde, what is the plan of those people who want to take power? What have they decided to do for the people who are living in poverty?* [passage omitted]

According to the president of the Chamber of Deputies, the country's political crisis looks complicated to several parliamentarians especially the latest statements by former de facto President Joseph Nerette who claims still to be president of the Republic. On that score, Monde asserted that events have passed Nerette by. [passage omitted] [end recording]

CCMN Official Reacts To Legislator's Statements

FL0704183594 Port-au-Prince Signal FM Radio in French 1030 GMT 7 Apr 94

[Text] There is already emotion within the Coordinating Committee for National Mobilization [CCMN] after the decision of the Conference of Presidents not to receive the members of this committee. Hubert De Ronceray calls President Monde's allegations spectacular.

[Begin De Ronceray recording, in Creole] You must be careful. You must not give much importance to certain spectacular statements. I call them spectacular statements because there are people who want to show that... [pauses] They are attributing much importance to themselves whereas what is being settled here is something very serious. It is about an imperiled country. Our contacts have shown us that many people within the parliament, both in the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate, take the matter very seriously. So, if there are other people who are providing entertainment, who are making somewhat noisy statements, we think it is because they want to attribute importance to themselves. But we are more than convinced that something serious will result from this resolution. [end recording]

Senator's Personal Interests Blamed for Senate Tie-Up

FL0704142994 Port-au-Prince Signal FM Radio in French 1030 GMT 6 Apr 94

[Excerpts] The Senate of the Republic is tied up. There is mistrust. [Senate] President Firmin Jean-Louis is being keenly criticized and is suspected of working to get named prime minister. Yvon Gislain, vice-president of the legal office [title as heard], explains that he can convene the Senate if he wishes. Here is a report by Daly Valet:

[Begin recording, in Creole] [Valet] It is true that the [Senate] office presided over by Bernard Sansaricq did not follow Senate regulations to the letter when it was being set up. It is true that this office trampled underfoot certain articles of the nation's Constitution. It is true that a climate of fear, worry, and insecurity was established at the Senate. It is also true, however, that Senator Firmin Jean-Louis, president of the legitimate [Senate] office, is not a wholly innocent party in the Senate crisis. Thus said several parliamentarians who have broken their silence to condemn the dilatory maneuvers being effected by Sen. Firmin Jean-Louis in order to prevent the Senate from holding sessions. This time, the reactions come from Sen. Firmin Jean-Louis's side itself.

Sen. Yvon Gislain, vice-president [title as heard] of the legitimate Senate office, condemns the fact that the office of which he is a member has not created any means for holding sessions at the Senate since [acting Prime Minister] Robert Malval was ratified.

[Gislain] The Senate crisis began back at the time of Malval's rafification. From the time Malval was ratified, nothing has been done at the Senate. There is an office, of which I am a member. I admit that the office has never taken any initiative to hold further sessions. Other elements within the Senate take the initiative to form a second office without respecting the constitutional norms regarding the Senate's internal regulations. This is what has made this office ineffectual. It is really unconstitutional. I think, however, something must be done so that we can come up with something because the country is collapsing due to the fact that the Senate remains totally tied up.

[Valet] Rumor has it that through the empty-seat policy at the Senate, Sen. Jean-Louis is defending his personal interests. Some say Sen. Jean-Louis is seeking to become prime minister. According to such people, this is why he does not want to hold Senate sessions. We have said: Well, these are rumors that Firmin Jean-Louis has not confirmed.

The vice-president of the legitimate Senate Office, however, calls on Sen. Jean-Louis to hold sessions so that

personal interests can be set aside for the benefit of the nation's interests, which are suffering.

[Gislain] The whole thing is a question of holding sessions. If sessions are held, the [parliamentary] plan will be passed. It will be ratified, because there will always be a majority that will allow the plan to pass. [passage omitted]

[Valet] After Deputy Duly Brutus, [Deputy] Antoine Joseph, and [Senator] Gislain, the ball is now in Sen. Jean-Louis's court, and he can do one of two things: either he will decide to create the means to hold Senate sessions or he will decide to let rumor continue to claim that, at the Senate, he is defending his own, personal interests. [end recording]

Chile Open to U.S. Talks on NAFTA

PY0604211394 Santiago EL MERCURIO in Spanish 23 Mar 94 p C5

[Text] On 22 March, Acting Foreign Minister Jose Miguel Insulza reiterated that Chile is open to discuss either of the two possibilities for trade integration with the United States. The possibilities are the signature of a free trade bilateral treaty or the incorporation of Chile into NAFTA, of which the United States, Mexico, and Canada are members.

According to Insulza, Finance Minister Eduardo Aninat informed U.S. Trade Representative Michael Kantor of these alternatives during his visit to Chile to attend Frei's presidential inauguration. Insulza said the two countries' trade representatives will define an agenda to begin talks soon. For this, it must first be decided whether Chile will use the bilateral agreement or NAFTA.

He added that the United States has not decided which countries will join the "fast track" [preceding two words in English] to begin the negotiations. This mechanism consists of an authorization granted by the U.S. Congress to the executive branch to negotiate quickly and then present a general agreement to the legislative branch for its approval.

The acting foreign minister said the two alternatives have advantages and disadvantages. He said a bilateral agreement is quicker because it does not include all the items of NAFTA, which foresees more complex trade relations between the United States, Mexico, and Canada. As for NAFTA, Insulza said the advantage is that Chile could join a broader trade association and the items to be negotiated are already known and defined.

Another aspect of bilateral relations between Chile and the United States is connected with the case of cyanide-poisoned grapes, which caused an embargo of Chilean fruit in March 1989. Regarding this subject, Insulza said the diplomatic negotiations are compatible with the lawsuit filed by Chilean fruit exporters. He added that some of the negotiation's elements could change according to the status of the lawsuit.

Regarding the approval of the ambassadors named by Chile, Insulza said that so far Argentina, Peru, and Mexico have given the "agreement" [preceding word in English] for Eduardo Rodriguez, Carlos Martinez Sotomayor, and Carlos Portales, respectively. He said this is due not only to the good relations maintained with these countries, but also to the expeditious processing of the documents, which sometimes is complex. He cited as an example the fact that in Europe the approval of ambassadors is made by a council of state and in some Latin American countries it is made by the Foreign Ministry, which grants the "agreement" directly and without delay.

Zedillo Appoints Campaign Manager; Reassures Labor

PA0804004394 Mexico City XEW Television Network in Spanish 0430 GMT 6 Apr 94

[From the "24 Hours" newscast]

[Text] PRI [Institutional Revolutionary Party] deputies, senators, and assembly members have affirmed their total support for PRI presidential candidate Ernesto Zedillo Ponce de Leon. Thanking them for their support, Zedillo said he favored honest elections and respect for the citizen's vote.

[Begin Zedillo recording] As the PRI's presidential candidate, I promise to respect the electoral law reliablely and honestly. Today I confirm, before my party colleagues and the entire nation, that I will assume each and every one of my party's commitments in favor of electoral democracy. [end recording]

Zedillo reiterated he will not accept any illicit votes and demanded that there be an external audit of the electoral register. He said he will heed the decisions, reached by consensus, on the presence of foreign visitors at the elections.

The PRI candidate said he is prepared to debate other presidential candidates and added that PRI members do not fear democracy. Zedillo observed that lasting economic progress and social improvement can only be achieved in a democratic system.

At the meeting with the legislators, candidate Zedillo appointed new PRI Secretary General Ignacio Pichardo Pagaza as the general coordinator of his political campaign.

Ernesto Zedillo Ponce de Leon also met with CTM [Confederation of Mexican Workers] leaders and promised to defend the workers' rights. He said he will allow changes to the labor law that will benefit Mexican workers and added that their benefits will not be withdrawn.

[Begin Zedillo recording] The time has come for wages to improve in Mexico. We can do this without risking the stability that has cost us so much. We will do it by improving productivity and making sure the benefits that result from this productivity end up in the Mexican workers' pockets. [end recording]

As he arrived and when he left the CTM auditorium, the PRI candidate hailed all PRI members gathered there.

Opposition Candidates on PRI Candidate Zedillo

PA0704230994 Mexico City EL FINANCIERO in Spanish 4 Apr 94 p 46

[Unattributed article: "This Is How the Opposition Views the New PRI Candidate"]

[Text] Opposition candidates have reacted with diverse opinions to the emergence of Ernesto Zedillo Ponce de Leon as substitute standard bearer for the PRI [Institutional Revolutionary Party] to the presidency. Presidential hopefuls Diego Fernandez de Cevallos, of the National Action Party (PAN); Cuauhtemoc Cardenas Solorzano, of the Democratic Revolutionary Party (PRD); Jorge Gonzalez Torres of the Mexican Green Ecologist Party (PVEM); Marcela Lombardo Otero of the Popular Socialist Party (PPS); Pablo Emilio Madero of the Mexican Democratic Party (PDM); Rafael Aguilar Talamantes, of the Cardenist Front for National Reconftruction Party (PFCRN); Cecilia Soto Gonzalez of the Labor Party, and Alvaro Perez Trevino of the Authentic Party of the Mexican Revolution (PARM) said the following:

Diego Fernandez de Cevallos: Ernesto Zedillo "is a respectable and honest person who will certainly play a good role as presidential hopeful for his party. I now have an adversary again and will strive for the presidency."

Cuauhtemoc Cardenas: "Perhaps now more than ever, he is the presidential candidate of continuity." Hopefully, despite how he was chosen, "it will be a clean and straighforward election."

Jorge Gonzalez Torres: "Zedillo represents the continuity of a sinking ship and of something that failed." The new candidate "bases his political campaign in the image of Colosio, because he lacks his own personality."

Marcela Lombardo: "The choice of Zedillo falls within the same democratic trend presented by Colosio, because it follows the same objectives and the same proposals of Colosio."

Pablo Emilio Madero: "I hope that Zedillo's participation in the elections will be pure and clear, conforming to reality. It is hoped he will assume the responsibility inherited from Colosio of talking to all sectors."

Rafael Aguilar Talamantes: "Zedillo's participation will raise the stature of the electoral race and will certainly guarantee that it will be civilized, tolerant, and respectful of all the candidates."

Cecilia Soto: "All the contendors deserve respect. Zedillo will be an important contender. It is hoped he will embrace Colosio's positions."

Alvaro Perez Trevino: "The proposals made to the people and the political line of Ernesto Zedillo will differ substantially from the proposals made by Luis Donaldo Colosio."

Catholic Church Agrees To Promote Peace in Chiapas

PA0804011194 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 1115 GMT 6 Apr 94

[Excerpts] Mexico City, 6 Apr (NOTIMEX)—Catholic Church authorities have reported that the Mexican Catholic hierarchy accepted a request from Manuel Camacho Solis, commissioner for peace in Chiapas, to promote peace in that southeastern state.

Today, Ramon Godinez Flores, secretary general of the Mexican Bishops Conference, said the Catholic hierarchy will prepare a campaign with "positive" messages directed at the people of Chiapas to overcome "obstacles" in the pacification process.

Camacho Solis announced in a news conference that he had asked the Mexican bishops for their cooperation to break the "vicious circle" that might "undermine" the pacification mechanism. After meeting privately with the members of the pro-Chiapas commission of the Bishops Conference, Camacho Solis said, without going into detail, that the "obstacles" and "vicious circle" in the reconciliation and pacification process in Chiapas must be overcome. [passage omitted]

Godinez said Camacho Solis asked the bishops to send messages of peace and harmony to the people of Chiapas with the objective of fomenting reconciliation and making the EZLN [Zapatist National Liberation Army] more receptive [sensibilizacion] to the Catholic hierarchy.

Godinez added that during the seven and one-half hour long meeting, Camacho Solis refused to mention dates for the resumption of the dialogue with the EZLN. Godinez also said the bishops see the positive side of the continuation of the virtual cease-fire.

The meeting with Camacho Solis was also attended by Vatican Ambassador Geronimo Prigione and SBmuel Ruiz, mediator in the peace dialogue and bishop of San Cristobal de las Casas, a Chiapas city located 1,200 km east of the Mexican capital. The meeting was presided by Adolfo Suarez Rivera, president of the bishops conference, who reiterated the Catholic clergy's willingness to support the peace process in Chiapas.

Report on Costa Rican-Mexican Free Trade Agreement

PA0804000594 Mexico City Radio ACIR Network in Spanish 0000 GMT 6 Apr 94

[Report by Elizabeth Diaz Otero from Los Pinos presidential residence in Mexico City; from the "ACIR Radio News" newscast]

[Excerpt] [Announcer] This afternoon, around 1400, Mexico and Costa Rica signed a bilateral free trade agreement at Los Pinos Presidential Palace. President Salinas de Gortari and Costa Rican President Rafael Angel Calderon Fournier, who arrived in Mexico City around noon, signed the document. This document, which has 23 chapters, will enter into effect on 1 January 1995. Here is Elizabeth Diaz Otero with a report:

[Diaz] Good afternoon. During the ceremony to sign the document, President Carlos Salinas de Gortari said the free trade agreement between Costa Rica and Mexico will promote greater trade and investment, employment, and welfare opportunities for both nations. This document, which opens the door for the free trade of goods between the two nations, will result in greater economic growth and development, and consequently more justice with accompanying tangible benefits for society.

In the presence of Costa Rican President Calderon, who came specifically for this ceremony, President Salinas underscored that the way to advance Latin American integration is with actions, not just words. The meeting took place in the Adolfo Lopez Mateos Hall at Los Pinos. President Salinas spoke about the diversification of relations between Mexico and other countries and the advantages of competition.

[Begin Salinas recording] National businesses, especially medium-sized and small businesses, will find broader markets with differences regarding levels of complexity and development. This agreement will benefit economies of scale and facilitate the specialization of various goods. With this treaty we sign today, we will also promote the development of the comparative advantages of all Mexican federal organizations. This agreement will lead to strengthening decentralization and federalism because domestic producers will be increasingly less dependent on the behavior of a single market. [end recording]

[Diaz] President Calderon euphorically called this free trade agreement with Mexico the greatest foreign policy accomplishment of his administration because it gives Costa Rican products access to the Mexican market, a huge market with 90 million people. He gave a long speech in which he said that 5 April marked the onset of the 21st century for Costa Rica and praised President Salinas, comparing him with Bolivar, Marti, Juarez, and San Martin. He emphasized that the free trade agreement should not be viewed as a deal that will only favor businessmen.

[Begin Calderon recording] The free trade agreement between Mexico and Costa Rica should not only be viewed as a matter of interest for businessmen and shopowners. The elimination of tariffs represents the elimination of economic, mental, and cultural barriers. This agreement will have significant repercussions for the future of all citizens, and it heralds a new period in relations between Mexico and Costa Rica and between Costa Rica and the other North American nations. [end recording]

[Diaz] This free trade agreement between Mexico and Costa Rica is considered the most thorough agreement

negotiated in Latin America. This is so because it contains an entire array of rules that will give transparency and security to the productive sectors; promote trade in goods and services; protect industrial secrets, brands, and copyrights; and facilitate investments in both countries. This treaty, as you have said, if ratified by the Mexican and Costa Rican senates, will enter into force on 1 January 1995. A large number of the tariffs will be eliminated—in the case of Mexican exports, 70 percent, while in the case of Costa Rican exports, 75 percent. This reduction of duties will continue gradually over a decade. It will mainly protect agricultural products like meat, plantains, poultry products, and sugar.

[Announcer] The signing of this treaty is beneficial for Costa Rica, as well as for Mexico, of course. I will cite an example to give an idea of the figures we are talking about. Costa Rica currently exports—according to 1993 statistics—an average of $60 million to Mexico, mainly raw materials. With the signing of this bilateral free trade agreement, Costa Rica will be able to increase it sale of goods and services to Mexico 400 percent. That is, the current value of the market, which is $60 million, could grow to $250 million, which is very beneficial for Costa Rica and the Mexican commercial opening. [passage omitted]

El Salvador

Police Await U.S. Report on Soldier's Death

PA0704203594 San Salvador Radio Maya Vision in Spanish 1200 GMT 7 Apr 94

[Report by Luis Orellana from the "Notivision" newscast]

[Text] Jose Maria Monterrey, director of the National Civilian Police [PNC], has said he expects the U.S. Embassy to publish a report on the death of Lieutenant Colonel Julio Ramon Rivera, a member of the U.S. Armed Forces. [Words indistinct] his police organization already issued an initial report on the incident based on results of an autopsy conducted on the body of the U.S. soldier.

[Begin Monterrey recording] U.S. investigators are here to collect as much information as possible. We will now wait because we already issued our report. The decision of what to do is now in their hands. [end recording]

Last Wednesday Robert Adams, chief of investigations of the Southern Command, which is headquarted in Panama, [words indistinct] commentaries on the incident after requesting the respective analyses from the Legal Medicine Institute. Julio Ramon Rivera died early last Sunday after he detonated a fragmentation grenade while under the influence of drugs. The explosion seriously injured three PNC agents. They should be compensated because they will not be able to work normally, Monterrey pointed out:

[Begin recording] [Monterrey, in progress] ...collaborators of justice. We can only do so much, but we cannot go beyond our limits. The justice system [words indistinct] or the Foreign Ministry.

[Reporter] [words indistinct]

[Monterrey] Yes, we talked yesterday with our Legal Department. I requested an appointment with the ambassador on Friday to talk about that. I think this will move ahead. Yesterday, a U.S. Embassy official afternoon [words indistinct] with me. We think that this is on the right track. [end recording]

Jose Maria Monterrey rejected claims from Rivera's relatives who said the U.S. soldier had not consumed drugs, as confirmed by the director of the Legal Medicine Institute, who based his opinion on an autopsy conducted by Salvadoran forensic surgeons.

Cristiani Rejects UN Secretary General's Report

PA0804010794 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 2042 GMT 6 Apr 94

[Text] San Salvador, 6 Apr (NOTIMEX)—The report on El Salvador presented by UN Secretary General Butrus Butrus-Ghali to the Security Council is not consistent with the national reality, Alfredo Cristiani, president of that Central American country, said today.

On 28 March Ghali presented a report to the UN Security Council concerning the development of the peace accords in El Salvador. He emphasized the government's failure to comply with several points of the Chapultepec Pact, signed in Mexico City in January 1992. Ghali indicated in his report that "it was necessary to adopt urgent measures so that the peace process can get back on track" and to "demand" that the Salvadoran Government comply with all the peace accords.

"The truth is that we are surprised because the reply implies that the government lacks the political will to comply with the accords, and this is not true," Cristiani said. He said Ghali's report does not explain to the Security Council all the reasons that have prevented compliance with important aspects of the agreements, and this has nothing to do with a lack of will.

The report says constitutional reforms have yet to be endorsed in the judicial branch and that there are delays in the distribution of land among former fighters, the National Civilian Police's deployment, and the former National Police's dismantling. Cristiani said: In the case of the constitutional reforms, the decision is up to the legislative branch rather than the executive branch, and "the (?government) is not responsible for this."

He said the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) is also responsible for the lack of compliance with the peace accords, particularly with regard to the distribution of land among former fighters. Cristiani accused the FMLN of refusing to participate in a high-level meeting to "leave the new government with a clean slate concerning the accords."

He called into question the fact that no one had waited for the report from Augusto Ramirez Ocampo, former chief of the [words indistinct] mission, who handed over his post on 31 March and whose analysis of the peace process is "more in accordance with the country's reality."

According to Cristiani, the report presented to the UN Security Council was prepared based on information delivered by the UN secretary general's adviser, Alvaro de Soto, who made "a quick visit to the country."

The Salvadoran president announced his government will send a written reply to Ghali next week, debating his report point by point. It will also send a copy to the Security Council. "The time to answer has come because it seems the government does not want to comply," Cristiani said, who noted that the official document would be released soon.

Roundup of Electoral Developments

PA0804005294

[Editorial Report] The following is a compilation of reports on developments related to the runoff in the Salvadoran presidential election scheduled for 24 April 1994.

On 5 April, the leftist coalition presidential slate confirmed its participation in the runoff presidential election scheduled for 24 April. Presidential candidate Dr. Ruben Zamora said the Salvadoran left hopes the irregularities registered on 20 March will be overcome so as to guarantee the cleanliness of the process. The commitment made by Supreme Electoral Tribunal (TSE) magistrates to correct the anomalies is key to democracy, and the cleanliness of the Salvadoran electoral process depends on it, Dr. Zamora remarked. Zamora concluded by saying a draft bill will be presented before the Assembly requesting a series of temporary reforms to the Electoral Code. (San Salvador Radio Cadena YSU in Spanish 1800 GMT 5 Apr 94)

Dr. Francisco Lima, leftist coalition vice presidential candidate, has strongly denied reports some coalition parties exerted pressure so that the left would not participate in the runoff elections. Lima stated: "What has characterized the coalition's political campaign is its sincerity." In a news conference, presidential candidate Zamora confirmed the TSE commitment to correct irregularities registered in the previous elections. He added: "The TSE has pledged to double the number of polling stations in the largest cities and place ballot boxes apart so as to avoid overcrowding." (San Salvador Canal Doce Television in Spanish 0300 GMT 6 Apr 94)

Guatemala

Congress Views Attacks on Deputies

Congress President on Attacks

PA0704234494 Guatemala City Teleonce Television in Spanish 1900 GMT 7 Apr 94

[News conference by National Congress President Marco Vinicio Villar Anleu with unidentified reporters; place and date not given; from the "Telepress" newscast—recorded]

[Text] Deputy Obdulio Chinchilla Vega remains hospitalized after he was the victim of an attack on 6 April. Reports from El Peten Department indicate that the controversial congressman was to be proclaimed presidential candidate next Saturday at a meeting of the 12 organizations affiliated with the Revolutionary Party in that department.

Today there were more reactions to the attack. Here is National Congress President Marco Vinicio Villar Anleu, who commented on the subject with reporters.

[Villar] The Board of Directors has no knowledge of death threats against any deputy or against Deputy Obdulio Chinchilla Vega in particular. We only know what has been reported about the attack on Deputy Obdulio Chinchilla Vega and the attack yesterday on Deputy Rene Barrios.

[Reporter] Will the National Congress Board of Directors adopt any special strategy? It is obvious that any deputy can be the target of an attack. Will the Board of Directors take any special security measures or [words indistinct]?

[Villar] Yes, the Congress will take preventive measures to protect the deputies and the building where congressional meetings are held. It is clear that this was an attack against the Congress as an institution, obviously to destabilize the country and hinder political activities.

[Reporter] [Words indistinct]

[Villar] No. Our analysis of the situation has remained within Congress. I have clearly said that we will not recommend a state of (?emergency). That decision must be made by the executive branch. It will depend on the information we receive from the ministers summoned by Congress and a meeting we will have with the president.

[Reporter] [Words indistinct]

[Villar] No. They were called upon to inform us of the mechanisms, it is not an (?interpellation).

[Reporter] [Words indistinct] health of the two deputies [words indistinct]?

[Villar] Thank God, we can say that Deputy Obdulio Chinchilla Vega, who is currently in a private hospital, is clinically out of danger, although his condition is still critical. He will be under observation for 72 hours. As for Deputy Rene Barrios Samayoa, thank God it was only an attempt to kidnap him. He is in perfect health, but he was emotionally and psychologically affected.

[Reporter] It is said that Deputy Chinchilla Vega knew there would be an attack against him and that he met with the defense minister and other top government officials the day before the attack to inform them.

[Villar] We have heard that report. Several deputies and even journalists have reported this, but the Board of Directors has no official knowledge of that.

[Reporter] Deputy, Deputy Rene Barrios reportedly has not filed any complaint with the National Police. [Words indistinct]

[Villar] We were informed yesterday and at last night's meeting with the deputies and the Board of Directors that he said he has information about the vehicles used in the kidnapping attempt. He said he spoke directly with the president and the presidential staff to apprise them of the facts. They are aware of the situation.

[Reporter] Mr. Congress President, how can it be possible that (?Congress has not) said anything about a possible state of emergency when the government is waging a campaign in Guatemala's [word indistinct] in support of such a measure. [Words indistinct]

[Villar] Quite simply, the executive branch is authorized to call a state of emergency. Congress cannot do it. All

Congress can do is confirm it if it is officially sent to the legislature. I believe that the state of law and constitutional order must prevail in such situations and that we should demand that the executive branch, which is in charge of public and internal security, adopt the necessary urgent measures within the framework of the Constitution and existing laws.

[Reporter] [Question indistinct]

[Villar] No. I have categorically stated that Congress will not request a state of emergency. So far Congress has not decided to do that. The executive branch has the authority to implement such a measure, and the decision will have to come from that branch.

[Reporter] [Words indistinct] can Congress ask the president to impose [words indistinct].

[Villar] That is what I announced at the beginning of the news conference. We are going to invite the president and the two ministers to a meeting.

[Reporter] [Words indistinct]

[Villar] In the president's case—I must be clear about this—in accordance with existing laws, he cannot be summoned to Congress or to the plenum. We can, however, extend a cordial invitation to him to attend a meeting within the framework of the coordination of the branches of state, but always observing each branch's independence.

[Reporter] Is it true that the secretary general of the Christian Democratic Party left the country because of this situation?

[Villar] I have no official information on that. I spoke to him early this morning. He was in the country as of 0830. Since then I have been in a meeting with the Board of Directors, and I do not have any official information about his departure.

[Reporter] [Words indistinct] to generate a coup d'etat. [words indistinct]

[Villar] I had not heard that until you mentioned it, so I have no opinion.

Session Held on Attacks

PA0704221094 Guatemala City Teleonce Television in Spanish 1900 GMT 7 Apr 94

[From the "Teleprensa" newscast]

[Text] The National Congress has declared itself in permanent session to discuss the actions against members of this institutions, including the attack against Deputy Obdulio Chinchilla Vega, the attempted kidnapping of Deputy Rene Barrios Samayoa, and threats against Deputy Jose Lobo Dubon. The deputies are analyzing the possibility of asking the United Nations to immediately appoint a special rapporteur to Guatemala.

Peace Commissioner Comments on Recent Agreements

PA0804000394 Guatemala City SIGLO VEINTIUNO in Spanish 5 Apr 94 p 2

[Text] On 4 April, Peace Commission leader Hector Rosada Granados reported that both the uprooting of people by the local armed confrontation and the historic clarification of the past—known as the Truth Commission's work—will be treated separately by the government and guerrilla delegates in May in what will be a follow-up of the peace talks. Rosada Granados said these subjects will be discussed in this order and that the second one will be debated in an ad hoc meeting. He said special mechanisms will be used to complete the discussion after it was decided to carry out the study and analysis. The official said the signing of the framework agreement early in the year was the end of the beginning and that the General Agreement on Human Rights now marks the beginning of the end.

Rosada said he regards the fulfillment of the agreement very probable because he detected in the URNG [Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity] commanders a determination to make good their words and reach a political understanding so they can be reincorporated into the country's legal life. He said the URNG leaders have also pledged their word abroad, and the negotiators and the international community are waiting for the two sides to abide by the agreement. Finally, he said the only thing that remains is to march forward with common sense and tolerance so this process, which now exists only on paper, can become reality.

Honduras

Congress Vice President on Economic Measures

PA0804004594 Tegucigalpa Voz de Honduras Network in Spanish 1145 GMT 5 Apr 94

[Report by Abraham Ardon for "The Morning Newspaper" newscast]

[Text] First Congress Vice President Jorge Arturo Reina returned from Cuba amid constant announcements about his return to the legislative branch. The president's brother announced he will carefully study the recently implemented economic measures before commenting on the issue. He said, however, these measures are undesirable and unpleasant because they negatively affect the majority of the Honduran people. Despite this, the congressman explained, the political slogan "Power to the people" is still valid, adding that some measures are unavoidable given the country's economic situation.

[Begin recording] [Reina] I want to tell you I have yet to talk with anyone in the economic cabinet about this issue. That is why I would rather say nothing right now. I will talk with some of them today, however, and I will be pleased to discuss the issue tomorrow.

[Ardon] Dr. Reina, what happened to the slogan "Power to the people"?

[Reina] It is still in effect. What happens is that we found an extremely serious economic situation. I have learned about the economic cabinet's analysis. It said the situation is so acute the country is headed for a collapse if no financing is found and if fuel consumption is not restricted. Consequently, certain measures are unwanted and undesirable for everyone, but they are absolutely essential. The magnitude and duration of those measures is another problem.

[Ardon] What about the human side mentioned in the campaign, Dr. Jorge Arturo Reina?

[Reina] I do not know. I do not know. Frankly, I cannot provide an answer because, like I said a few minutes ago, I have yet to talk to the economic cabinet. I would rather not comment.

[Ardon] There is already talk about the implementation of further economic measures, Dr. Reina. What is your opinion?

[Reina] I believe the measures should not continue. Something should be done to prevent those measures because the essential goal is to help the vast majority of the population and seek the legal, juridical, and financial mechanisms that allow us to help the vast majority of the Honduran people. That is the main goal of this government.

[Ardon] Dr. Reina, the trips made by the previous government's officials were criticized. How do you explain your trip to Cuba?

[Reina] Not a single cent of the Honduran Government's money was spent. Not a single cent.

[Ardon] Dr. Reina, did you talk with Commander Fidel Castro in the island of Cuba? Also, who issued the invitation?

[Reina] [Words indistinct] invitation and the minister of tourism visited Honduras some time ago, and he invited us to see the status of their plans to dewelop tourism in Cuba. Frankly, they are spectacular. Frankly, they are spectacular. I had no idea they could be done in this magnitude.

[Ardon] Dr. Reina, your participation in the legislative branch has been questioned because you do not frequently attend its sessions.

[Reina] I already said I would return to the National Congress after Holy Week—and here I am, ready to work full time. I will always be willing to cooperate with the Executive Branch. [end recording]

Says Alleged Plot Not Smokescreen

PA0704221494 San Pedro Sula TIEMPO in Spanish 6 Apr 94 p 6

[Text] Tegucigalpa—Yesterday, Jorge Arturo Reina, brother of President Carlos Roberto Reina, rejected claims that the alleged plot to assassin the president is part of a "smokescreen" to cover up the country's real problems and assured that no Liberal would attack the government.

Yesterday, Jorge Arturo Reina, first vice president of the legislative branch, arrived at legislative branch headquarters and said that "we cannot rule out the fact that democracy is always exposed to dangers and that there are always minds capable of hatching anything to destabilize democratic order."

"I, however, think that the problem should neither be overblown nor minimized," he added, after denying that this is a "smokescreen." He said "that this is absolutely false because it was not planned by Honduran intelligence or the government. It was kindly passed on by a neighboring government (Nicaragua) to the Honduran Government."

As for Private Secretary Lucio Izaguirre's hint that there are Liberals seeking to destabilize the government, Reina said he had not heard about it. But he clarified that "no one is conspiring in Honduras, there is no national goal to do so and much less within our political party."

"The Liberal Party is more united than ever. It is normal for someone to voice his views within the Liberal Party, and this will continue to happen because we censor no one."

As for the economic crisis and announced increases in electricity rates, the president's brother said that there is a need for ample and clear explanation on the real situation in the country to ensure that Hondurans are informed and support the thankless and bitter decisions that the government has to make.

Nicaragua

Gen. Ortega Vows Not To Leave EPS Under Pressure

PA0704213694 Managua Radio Nicaragua Network in Spanish 1945 GMT 7 Apr 94

[Report by Eduardo Estrella Baltodano from the "Cosmovision" newscast]

[Text] A few minutes ago, a special meeting was held between National Assembly President Luis Humberto Guzman and Sandinist People's Army [EPS] Chief General Humberto Ortega Saavedra. After the meeting, Gen. Ortega said various issues had been discussed, including the country's pacification, security for the Nicaraguan people, and the military organization law.

Addressing local and international reporters, Gen. Ortega reiterated that he will not step down under

pressure from the United States or because of anyone's whim. Gen. Ortega Saavedra said:

[Begin Ortega recording] The problem is not whether Humberto Ortega leaves the Army. That is not Nicaragua's problem. The problem is whether I am capable of bequeathing to Nicaragua the Army it has never traditionally had. The problem is that Humberto Ortega will not leave the Army because of what happened on (?2) September, which resulted from pressure from the United States and from whimsy. Neither Humberto Ortega nor anyone else will ever leave this Army within that context.

The problem is not whether Humberto Ortega leaves but how he leaves. We are capable of providing the country with a military law that will consolidate this Army as the nation's Army, an Army with a pledge to defend national sovereignty and safeguard the security of all Nicaraguans regardless of their race, religious creed, or political affiliation. To this end, I believe that to insist that the problem is whether or not Humberto Ortega steps down this year would be to view the issue quite superficially.

I must state clearly that I will never leave this Army, nor will the Army allow it—it is a matter of dignity and principles—under the conditions that were raised on 2 September. I will never retire under such conditions.

This not mean that I am trying to enthrone myself or that I want to remain here forever. That is not the case. My departure should not result from pressures; it should be the result of a decision among Nicaraguans regarding what is the most advantageous thing to do within the framework of the law and the framework of dignity; it must not be the result of pressure, let alone pressure from foreigners. [end recording]

No Agreement Reached on Armed Forces Law

PA0804030194 Managua Radio Corporacion in Spanish 2300 GMT 7 Apr 94

[From the "Five O'Clock Sharp" newscast]

[Excerpt] At a very lively news conference during which reporters asked many questions, General Humberto Ortega said the Army and the executive branch had still not reached an agreement on the military organization law. He said an agreement will probably be reached in 15 days but that the draft has not been sent to the legislature because no consensus has been reached. We asked Gen. Ortega if he was not the center of discord [words indistinct] his retirement. He denied this. Let us hear what Humberto Ortega said:

[Begin Ortega recording] I think we have to be confident. Our work with the executive branch has been detailed and determined. We have discussed it several times precisely because we want to give the country and the Army a law that is a solid basis for the future. We do not want things to be done haphazardly. I think it is preferable to have a delay and end up with a solid document that can take us into the end of this century and into the next than to reach an agreement quickly. We want a serious law, not something done carelessly that will not be respected later or whose regulations will not be followed or that impede the institution's efforts to mature, as has been the case throughout this century.

The truth is that we did not inherit a Nicaraguan Army. The National Guard was destroyed in the 1979 revolt. We started to build the Army after the peace agreement was signed in Sapoa in 1988. During the war [words indistinct] during the Reagan administration, it was impossible to build an Army for all Nicaragua. So this Army is still young and things are still rough. It is true that there has been a delay in the executive branch's and Army's search for a mature, adequate, and feasible law. We think it is worth it to wait 15 days at the most to see if we are able to reach an agreement on a law that will not be disregarded later on. The Army and I are totally willing to achieve this goal, and we are confident that we will overcome the problems that still, today, prevent me from telling Nicaragua that the executive branch and the Army have reached a thorough agreement. We agree on many things, but there are others crucial issues about which we have not been able to reach an adequate consensus. I am confident that we will reach it. [end recording] [passage omitted]

Assembly President on Talks With Gen Ortega

PA0804021294 Managua Radio Corporacion in Spanish 2310 GMT 7 Apr 94

[News conference by National Assembly President Luis Humberto Guzman with unidentified reporters; place not given; from the "Five O'Clock Sharp" newscast; broadcast in progress—recorded]

[Text] [Reporter] ...Humberto Guzman, General Ortega emphatically stated he will not step down under the current circumstances. What happened? Did he negotiate with you? What did you talk about?

[Guzman] I do not know if he emphatically stated he will not step down. He said he is perfectly aware of the temporary nature of his mandate; he knows it is for a fixed period of time. It seems to me he is aware of the temporary nature of that mandate.

[Reporter] Do you agree with the military organization law being debated in the National Assembly?

[Guzman] It is obvious that movements and deployments by the Armed Forces should be in accordance with the law.

[Reporter] Ortega said an agreement could be reached within 15 days and that there are problems with the executive branch at present. What can you say about this?

[Guzman] He told me there are various criteria regarding the military organization law, but it seems to me that these differences do not pertain precisely to the nature of his mandate.

[Reporter] If the military organization law is not presented, if a consensus is not reached between the executive branch and Armed Forces, will the National Assembly present its own draft bill?

[Guzman] According to the Constitution, the National Assembly is the country's legislative branch, and it must do its duty.

[Reporter] Will it?

[Guzman] Of course.

[Reporter] Are any draft bills ready?

[Guzman) Yes, there are a few draft bills pertaining to military organization. I would like to say, however, that the National Assembly is not trying to create unproductive and useless crises in the country. We are not setting a deadline for the government to submit its draft bill. I must say, however, that we cannot wait indefinitely. We have promised the country that we would pass a military organization law during the first half of 1994, and the National Assembly will keep its word.

[Reporter] Doctor, you stated emphatically that Gen. Ortega should step down before the year ends, as President Chamorro said. Do you still hold that opinion?

[Guzman] I maintain that public posts should be temporary. That includes the post of Armed Forces chief.

[Reporter] The general spoke of a 15-day deadline. Has the National Assembly reached an agreement with the general regarding that 15-day deadline?

[Guzman] He told me he expects and hopes that within the next 15 days he and the cabinet will reach an agreement concerning a draft bill for the military organization law.

[Reporter] The general said the Assembly cannot prepare a draft bill without reaching a consensus with the military.

[Guzman] The National Assembly obviously consults with the people who are affected the most by any given law, just as it invites bankers to discuss the general banking law or to discuss the advantages or disadvantages of certain laws. Obviously it must do the same with the Armed Forces on the military law.

[Reporter] [Words indistinct] working on certain topics, according to Gen. Ortega.

[Guzman] That was the gist of the conversation. He told me there were difficulties with certain issues on which agreements had not been reached but that, in his opinion, this debate should not extend beyond the next two weeks.

[Reporter] He spoke of (?vital) topics. (?What are those vital topics) [words indistinct] after eight hours of talks.

[Guzman] They involve the Armed Forces' general functions, but I would like to say that I do not believe the deadline on the issue of Gen. Ortega's remaining in the Army were among the issues discussed.

Police Commander on Arrest of Suspects in 'Plot'

PA0704185094 Managua Sistema Nacional de Television Network in Spanish 0200 GMT 7 Apr 94

[From the "National Newscast"]

[Text] The arrest of two suspects in a plot against the Honduran president, the arrest of Commander Saul Alvarez' murderer in Miami, and the drug problem in the country were topics addressed by Commander Fernando Caldera, director of the National Police. Police arrested two individuals suspected of participating in the plot to assassinate Honduran President Carlos Roberto Reina. Santiago Rivas Betancourt was arrested in Esteli on 5 April, and Luis Rene Quintero was arrested in Managua on 6 April.

[Begin Caldera recording] Because it is a sign of a serious act, we are proceeding to arrest them. The law empowers us to hold them for 72 hours; during that time, we are going to try to determine the facts. [end recording]

Another Nicaraguan suspect in the case, which was made public in Honduras on 5 April, remains at large. Honduran authorities have identified him as Roger Arguello. Caldera made these statements when he announced Commander Saul Alvarez' murderer was arrested in Miami last week. Javier or Manuel Velasquez murdered Commander Alvarez on 21 September 1992 during a transportation strike. The murderer illegally entered the United States by going from Managua to Guatemala and Mexico, then to the United States. The police worked in coordination with the FBI and Dade County police to capture Velasquez.

[Begin Caldera recording] He is now under the jurisdiction of immigration authorities. The Nicaraguan Government—it is no longer up to the police—will make every effort to bring him to Nicaragua so he can be tried in Managua. [end recording]

Velasquez left the country 10 days after the shoot-out on the northern highway.

On another topic, Commander Caldera said he is unaware of the State Department report which indicated Nicaragua has reportedly not achieved progress with its strategy against drug trafficking.

[Being Caldera recording] The Nicaraguan state has been advancing in the antidrug struggle starting from zero. Drug trafficking in Nicaragua is a relatively new crime. [end recording]

He described the draft law against drugs as a modern law that will fight crime.

Reacts to U.S. Drug Report

PA0704190494 Managua BARRICADA in Spanish 7 Apr 94 p 2

[Report by Juan Jose Lacayo]

[Text] Yesterday, National Police Chief Fernando Caldera said he did not have any details concerning a U.S. State Department report that charges Nicaragua has made little progress in its struggle against drug trafficking and money laundering. Nevertheless, Caldera said, "The Nicaraguan state has made progress in its fight against drug trafficking, a fight that started from nothing."

Caldera indicated that in Nicaragua drug trafficking is a relatively new crime. The police chief said: "Drug consumption, particularly cocaine consumption, is a new element that has increased significantly in the past two years with trafficking." He said this kind of criminal activity has increased 116 percent. "These actions have significantly increased since 1993," the high- ranking police officer asserted.

Nevertheless, Caldera explained that last year, the National Assembly began discussing a draft drug fighting bill, which he termed modern. He also stressed that last year the government created the National Antidrug Commission, while police created the Narcotics Directorate. "We now have a higher level of coordination with the DEA and Central American police forces," Caldera remarked as he recalled that the amount of drugs confiscated has increased sharply. "We are not yet doing everything we can, but the foundations have been laid," he pointed out.

Caldera explained that the U.S. DEA does not have an office in Managua, "but we maintain a close, cooperative relationship." He insisted a large publicity campaign will be needed to fight drug trafficking and consumption, but he warned that there will not be enough resources this year to undertake such a campaign.

Caldera said he wants "all of us" in Nicaragua "to develop a social disapproval for those engaged in drug-related activities in order that these people do not acquire the levels of notoriety they have in other countries in which there is a certain status attributed to narcotraffickers."

The police chief added there are abuses by some judges who lend themselves to the objectives of drug traffickers. "These are very rare cases, and they do not mean that everyone within the judiciary branch is in on it," he explained.

In addition, Caldera admitted some policemen have been punished for collaborating with drug traffickers, and he reiterated that police organizations are determined to fight these crimes.

The police chief said money laundering is an activity that is very easily detected in our country, although he admitted it might take place on a small scale in Nicaragua. "Dollars are laundered everywhere, even in the United States," Police Chief Caldera concluded.

National Police Computers Improve Operations

94P20603B

[Editorial Report] Managua LA PRENSA in Spanish of 23 March 1994 on page 12 reports that the National Police is installing specialized computer equipment which will enable it to retrieve information from Interpol files. The equipment was made available through the good offices of Interpol liaison for Latin America Juan Carlos Antoniassi. Ministry of Government Deputy Minister Frank Cesar explained that the computers will enable authorities to review more efficiently the legal status of nationalized citizens.

Text of FSLN Principles, Program Document

94CA0087A Managua BARRICADA in Spanish 18 Feb 94 p 5

[Proposal by committee on "Details of the FSLN Principles and Program"; first four paragraphs are introduction]

[Text] In its session on 28 August 1993, the Sandinist Assembly convened the National Congress of the FSLN [Sandinist National Liberation Front] to an extraordinary session to be held in May 1994. In both the National Leadership and the Sandinist Assembly, it has organized committees to prepare documents to serve as a basis for discussion.

One of these committees is called "Details of the *FSLN Principles and Programs*". Its specific mandate was to prepare positions for discussion on four issues:
a) The FSLN's position on its relations with the U.S. Government.
b) The FSLN's position on the government of Nicaragua.
c) The FSLN's position on the problem of property.
d) The FSLN's position on the multiclass composition of the Sandinist membership.

The present document is the result of the work done by this committee, which revised the *FSLN's Principles and Program* on the issues listed above. It hereby presents the following proposal which updates and attempts to clarify the FSLN's positions.

This document is the basis for discussion which the Sandinists should use in their debate. The theses were prepared so as to facilitate discussion and so that the FSLN members can vote to express whether they wish to approve, reject, or amend each thesis. Then the results of the debate will be sent back to the Sandinist Assembly's Program Committee and be incorporated in the final version which the Congress will consider and approve in its Extraordinary Session to be held from 20 to 22 May.

I. FSLN's Position on the Government of Nicaragua

1. The FSLN opposes any restoration of the system of exploitation of human beings that prevailed during Somozism, the oligarchical governments of the past, or any other form of dictatorship or authoritarianism, either civilian or military, which represents a restriction of the exercise of participatory democracy.

2. The FSLN demands that the Public Administration be a loyal servant of the interests of the people and the Nation, for which purpose it shall fight against embezzlement, administrative corruption, abuses of state and community property, and against any manifestation of arrogance, bureaucratism, and negligence in public activity.

3. It will work to decentralize the government's role and bureaucracy by providing strong support for municipal autonomy. Consequently, it asks that the necessary resources be given to each local government to promote development within its territory.

4. The FSLN will work to ensure respect for Nicaragua's *Constitution* and democratic institutions. This will include limits on the State in relation to civil society and the rights of the individual; independence of state powers; periodic, transparent, and fair elections; respect for law and legality as the standard governing relations among individuals, and between individuals and society and the state; respect for and development of individual protections and liberties and human rights, as well as institutions, organizations, and areas for participation and management by the workers and by all the people, so that democracy may be transformed into an everyday occurrence.

To cope with the crisis, overcome instability, and reactivate the nation, the FSLN proposes:

1. To pursue a clear strategy of opposition to government policies that are causing the nation's prostration and the impoverishment of the vast majority of the people.

2. To demand that the state serve as the principal promoter of national development, guaranteeing to the people their integral democratic participation in this development, and performing, without pursuing state-aggrandizing aims, a regulatory role for economic activity that will work to benefit the majority of the people.

The state needs to ensure that the development model to be pursued in Nicaragua does not give rise to large concentrations of capital and of power in a few decision-making centers; to the loss of national sovereignty by succumbing to foreign capital; to exclusion and poverty in large sectors of the population; and to injustice and arbitrary actions concerning access to the opportunites provided by the nation's resources. In summary, the state must not allow Nicaragua to again become a breeding ground for conditions that will lead to confrontation and violence.

3. We demand economic democratization as an indispensable requirement for achieving stability and national economic development with social justice. State economic policies must act in consistency with those objectives, by encouraging the development of small and midsized businesses, cooperatives, and associative enterprises.

The only way to overcome the vulnerability of the democratic process and ensure its stability is by basing this process on a nonexclusive economic and social project that rests on the foundation of economic democratization.

4. We demand that the state guarantee freedom of trade, along with fulfilling its obligation to protect citizens when, in crisis conditions caused by a variety of reasons, unjust situations of speculation arise that primarily afflict the poorest sectors of the population.

5. The Sandinist Front is working for a thorough democratization of the state and to strengthen Sandinist influence in institutions and in all spheres of power of civil society.

We believe that in order to deepen and expand democratization, it is of strategic importance to promote the organizing capability and influence of the organizations of civil society: social and popular movements, productive and professional associations, the media, etc.

The campaign to democratize the state and institutions is an ongoing and strategic objective for Sandinists. Today from the opposition, and tomorrow—after we win the elections—from inside the government, the FSLN has no desire to wield absolute power.

6. For the Sandinist Front, the electoral approach is the only valid way to regain the government. Acting in harmony with our democratic commitment, we proclaim that today there is no room or justification for armed conflict in Nicaragua.

The Sandinist Front calls upon Sandinists to promote and develop methods of civic struggle that will be most effective in developing a political consensus in support of its goals.

II. FSLN's Position on Property

1. Property must be in accordance with the nation's economic development and social justice for the population. For that reason, the FSLN must fight for the security, democratization, and productivity of all forms of property: private, individual, or business; cooperative, associative, community, and public property.

The FSLN should encourage respect for private property by promoting the productivity of its possession and the social function of its management and use. This political claim to property must be founded on and sustained with efficiency in economic management, while at the same time the concentration of property in just a few families is discouraged.

2. The FSLN respects and defends the stability of private property. In the same way, it also encourages the development of all forms of cooperative, associative, and community property, considering them an expression of the socialization process.

3. The FSLN opposes the confiscation of property in any of its forms of management.

4. The FSLN considers the following to be strategic undertakings: productive and commercial organization, access to credit and investment programs, participation in national and international markets by small and midsized forms of property, as well as that of cooperative, associative municipal, and community property.

5. The FSLN pledges to the nation's economic and social agents that it will deal with the issues of property as they relate to political stability, productive growth, jobs, social equality, and environmental sustainability.

In this context, the FSLN is working for the immediate legalization of the property of workers and campesinos in concessional or licensing conditions, terms, and for just compensation to be provided to sectors whose property rights have been infringed.

III. FSLN's Position on its Social Composition

1. The fundament of Sandinism's *Political Program* and of its *Statutes*. The FSLN is a multiclass organization in its composition, which reflects the composition of the Nicaraguan population.

The Political Program of the FSLN—the proposal it offers to society—in which it expresses the objectives of Sandinism in each phase, is decisive. Sandinism is not defined simply by the composition of the membership ranks of the FSLN.

2. After 10 years of profound changes, Nicaraguan society is now a pluralistic society. Today economic and political power are distributed among numerous government institutions and throughout civil society.

The Front recognizes this situation as the basic condition necessary for an authentically democratic system to function. We propose to strengthen this tendency by encouraging and developing it in all of the nation's socioeconomic sectors, without failing to prioritize the strengthening of the capacity of the masses to exercise political power for the defense of their interests, and in favor of an economic, social, and political model that will benefit them.

3. As a revolutionary party, the FSLN must extend its roots deep into the masses, through its efforts to defend revolutionary gains and the democratic transformations of society.

The Front must promote and defend the campesinos as the most important sector at this time, because of their economic significance and their political weight.

4. The FSLN must clearly define its policy toward various social sectors, not only social classes, but those forces that play an important role in society, like women, young people, indigenous communities, the Atlantic Coast communities, territorial movements like the Community Movement, etc.

IV. FSLN's Position on Relations with the U.S. Government

1. In the context of establishing relations of respect, cooperation, and friendship with all nations, the FSLN calls for a new relationship to be created between the United States and Nicaragua, in which mutual interests may be preserved and historic differences may be resolved to our mutual advantage and benefit.

The events judged by the International Court of Justice in The Hague cannot be repeated. Nicaragua's policy toward the United States must be oriented toward encouraging that country to help to remedy the material damages caused, both by bilateral means and within multilateral organizations.

2. The FSLN believes that a respectful relationship between the United States and Nicaragua has two essential components: strict respect on the part of Nicaragua for self-determination and noninterference in the internal affairs of other states, and meaningful respect on the part of the United States for the sovereign and democratic decisions of the Nicaraguan people; and that the political, trade, and cooperative relations of the United States shall not be determined by the political ideology of whatever government may be currently in office in Nicaragua, nor shall any type of strings be attached to these relations.

Therefore, the FSLN will pursue an active relationship with all political parties and social groups of the United States which are prepared to move in this direction.

3. The FSLN supports the membership of Nicaragua in particular and Central America in general in free trade agreements with the United States and other countries. This integration must allow Nicaragua sufficient time and the commercial and tariff terms necessary for Nicaragua's productive capacity to be brought to a competitive position in relation to the rest of Central America.

Such integration must mean a net flow of financial aid and capital from the North to the South, which will enable us to overcome the deterioration in our people's standard of living and promote the recovery of our economies. It must be a means so that all, both North and South, may benefit equally and proportionally, rather than simply being a formula for helping the United States to solve its own economic problems.

Sergio Ramirez on FSLN Unity, Sandinist Media

94CA0090A Managua EL SEMANARIO in Spanish
28 Feb-2 Mar 94 pp 14-15

[Interview with FSLN, Sandinist National Liberation Front, leader Sergio Ramirez Mercado with unidentified correspondents and audience members; place and date not given; on radio program "60 Minutes With Xavier Reyes Alba"; first paragraph EL SEMANARIO introduction]

[Text] In the midst of what has perhaps been the greatest public debate ever generated in the Sandinist Front's history, Dr. Sergio Ramirez Mercado, leader of the party's bench in Parliament and of the recently emerging faction known as "For a Sandinism of the Majorities," appeared on the radio program "60 Minutes With Xavier Reyes Alba" to present his political views. The following is the edited, condensed transcription of questions posed by the newsman and his audience, along with Ramirez Mercado's replies.

[Question] Why should Sergio Ramirez sign a document of one faction of the FSLN? I have heard people say that the DN [National Directorate] should stay out of it and then, later on, act as a "grand judge" and hand down a final ruling.

[Ramirez] That view is now history. The FSLN is going through a very important phase of evolution and transformation during which differing points of view must be expressed in order to enrich debate. I have always thought that ideas and thought were the only thing that could change the world—along with action, naturally—since no change takes place without thought behind it.

I am a member of the DN, elected on the 1991 ticket, and we were supposed to remain on the Directorate until 1995, but we have not been protected by history. If a special congress is to be held, it is because the party leadership comes up for election. In other words, starting now and until May, I consider myself a provisional leader of the FSLN because that congress will decide whether or not I continue to occupy a post of leadership. Based on that freedom of action and thought, I felt authorized to sign a document expressing a nonconfrontational position, a document that is an attempt to contribute to the debate. When a group of FSLN comrades met to draft the document, we discussed whether Major Luis Carrion, who is also a member of the DN, and I should sign or not. We decided that the most honest and most transparent thing was for us to sign since we were involved in the drafting. We could not fall back on the old trick of throwing the stone and then hiding our hand.

[Question] How can you win power when some think that the Front is not yet prepared to be unified, not just because factions exist, but because of an entire culture, different styles of work and leadership, that seem to stand in the way of any possibility of unity?

[Ramirez] That is precisely what we must change. The FSLN must face up to a process of transformation because it has never been afraid of change. Far worse would be to imagine a conservative Sandinism afraid of taking a chance, of moving forward, of thinking. If the Sandinists were able to put an end to the Somoza dictatorship, it was because they moved ahead, not just with military action, but also with new political ideas, by joining forces and forming alliances. The creation of the Group of the Twelve was a key move enabling the FSLN to take power by calling upon social sectors which, at the time, did not yet envision the FSLN as a government alternative and which in 1979 did so despite the fact that the FSLN proposed the option of armed struggle. Now, if what the FSLN is presenting is the option of civil, electoral struggle, then I believe all the more strongly that we can once again summon thousands of Nicaraguans who believe that this country deserves a better fate and that the FSLN can provide it.

[Question] The crux of the matter is how to unite the so-called "majorities." What must the Sandinists offer in order to win them back?

[Ramirez] A very clear message. I think the Sandinists lost the 1990 elections because many Nicaraguans began to harbor many prejudices in their minds. The people thought the FSLN was a symbol of war, that it would not solve the country's economic problems.

[Question] But it continues to project that image at times.

[Ramirez] That is what we want and need to change at all costs. I maintain that if the FSLN does not get to the majorities with the image of a civilian party, removed from violence, removed from any confrontation, one that wants harmony and reconciliation for this country, then it will be very difficult for us to rally the votes we need to win because we are indeed talking about votes here. Furthermore, it neither frightens me nor makes me ashamed to say that the FSLN is a revolutionary, electoral party because it has to go into the elections and win. One wins elections by rallying the will of all those who go into the little booth and who then, alone with their conscience, place a mark under a flag and decide for whom they will vote. That is the decisive, definitive time for a political party, far from the noise of the crowds and the demonstrations. I hope that a new, transparent FSLN, an FSLN that is very clear and firm about what it says, about doing what it says and saying what it does, can convince the voters that we are once again a viable alternative for the country.

[Question] I would like you to define what you mean when you say, "We oppose violence," what kind of weapons the working people still have, people who, because of the Sandinism of the majorities, accused the group of being social democratic.

[Ramirez] I do not think the FSLN has any weapons left. Those weapons are now in the hands of the Army and the Police, which are the only institutions allowed to have

weapons in this country. This must be stated quite clearly and without fear. The FSLN is a party that must use all the paths of civic struggle that are open to it, not lending themselves to confusion. The FSLN must fight from the perspective of the majorities, their conquests and their rights. The right to strike, marches, and social pressure are legitimate instruments. What is not legitimate is resorting to violence in a strike, attacking those who do not agree with what is being done.

In addition, certain terms are deliberately used to confuse the people. I am referring to the notorious "social democracy." As a result of a decision by the Sandinist Assembly, the FSLN appealed to the Socialist International, an international organization of social democratic parties, to admit it as a full member, but the IS decided to admit the FSLN as an observer. The request was a party decision, not a decision by individuals in the party. Before that, as we prepared for the World Interparliamentary meeting, we decided, following the assassination of Olof Palme, one of the outstanding social democratic leaders in the world, to give his name to the convention center. Major Daniel Ortega, secretary general of the party, personally attended the funeral of Willy Brandt, another of the foremost social democratic leaders in the world, in order to pay homage to him on behalf of the Sandinists. The Sandinists have always been a friend of social democrats and continue to be. I am not an enemy of any social democratic leader. Next week I will meet in Spain with Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez, a great friend of Nicaragua and the Nicaraguan revolution. He is a social democrat and does not go around denying it. I am not a social democrat, but I am not their enemy either and see nothing wrong with being one. I am a democratic Sandinist who believes that the only possible Sandinism is democratic Sandinism because if someone were to tell me that there is a type of Sandinism that is potentially totalitarian, I would not believe it.

[Question] Why is there no definition of the left anywhere in the document?

[Ramirez] It is stated in the document, a leftist document. It is not, in my view, a rightist document, nor is the one drafted by our other comrades in the FSLN rightist because the FSLN is not a party of the right. The Nicaraguan political spectrum has a right and a left and the political space occupied by the latter is filled by the FSLN. However, it is necessarily a democratic left and I find it unnecessary to speak of a democratic left. The left is the left, the left of today. Perhaps there was a totalitarian left before, but it disappeared and one cannot say "I belong to the democratic left" because this would amount to agreeing that there is also a left that is not democratic and for me such a thing is impossible. If I belong to the left, I am democratic.

[Question] How convinced is the entire FSLN and all its members that they do indeed no longer represent the majority, that they cannot lay claim to representing the nation or thinking for it, that we must have a change in style, method, and thought in order for the FSLN to return to power in the 1996 elections?

[Ramirez] I believe there are many more people convinced of that than would appear. An attempt is often made to give a false image of radicalism in the ranks of Sandinism, as if it were enclosed in a radicalism with no way out and as if ideas about transformation, change, and renewal existed only in the heads of a handful of intellectuals. I am labeled an intellectual as if it were an offense, and it seems to me to be somewhat odd that anyone who thinks or who is an intellectual should be treated in a pejorative manner. All of us who think are in some way intellectuals, but the term "intellectual" is used to denote an elite that is unaware of what is happening among the rank and file, that only thinks about things unrelated to Nicaragua, as if to renew Sandinism, to transform its ideas, to go back to the majorities, were social democratic, European notions removed from this society. I have even been accused of having a European education, as if that were somehow negative.

[Listener fromn Boaco] Why do you not have access to broadcasting stations such as "Radio Ya," "Radio Sandino," "Channel 4," and all the supposedly Sandinist media? That worries the rank and file because while the leaders say there is no split, we see different groups. What is happening within the party?

[Ramirez] I share your concerns, comrade. They are well-founded, but you should not be worried about finding different ways of thinking within the FSLN. Thought must be heterogeneous in order to enrich debate, provided we are still speaking the same language. What we should be concerned about is silence, particularly when one is not allowed to express oneself. I would be very happy to speak on "Radio Ya," but I do not have access to that station. About three months ago, I participated in a debate on the constitution on Channel 4, but I would not say that I have access to that television or radio time. I think we must be honest in stating that this is an internal problem of the FSLN that we must air publicly. I prefer not to have time on certain radio stations, but I hope they will not mention me or my late brother at all! I prefer it that way because I have always opposed insults, slander or lies, which I cannot accept as a Sandinist. Your concern is well-founded because all Sandinists should have access to all the media. It is a great pleasure to be on Xavier Reyes's program because he invited me and has never denied me access. It was I who delayed coming for reasons of time.

[Question] The emergence of currents of thought with well-defined positions has "shifted the ground" under the feet of those traditionally accustomed to "the line," to the fact that such matters were not debated publicly. They say they are confused, that the party is split and is falling apart.

[Ramirez] That is a concern which must be removed from the thinking of people who truly believe in the

strength of the party. The FSLN continues to be a very strong party and will be strengthened even further the more we debate, the more we think. You do not have to worry about me. If the ideas I present do not find acceptance among the majority of the FSLN and the latter makes a different decision, then, in a disciplined manner, I will yield to what the party says. That is why I belong to a party. I will continue to be a member of the FSLN. I would never switch to another party, nor would I fit into any political or ideological faction other than my FSLN. If the majority decides that the methods of struggle that we must choose are precisely those which I view as the wrong ones, then I shall continue to criticize such positions if they are taken by the majority, but I would not leave the party. I have complete confidence that a revolutionary party must evolve constantly. Every tree must shed its leaves in order to have new green ones; that is one of life's laws.

[The same listener] I am concerned about the split in the party and I wish you would explain why, when you continue to be a member of the DN, Mr. Guadamuz denies you access to his program. What is going on? I wish you would be more explicit.

[Ramirez] It is not that I am avoiding responding because that is not appropriate for a leader, but I think the question should be put to the person who is denying me space. He should reveal his reasons for doing so. However, it should also be put to those who are insulting and slandering me and the memory of my brother Rogelio. Let them explain why they act as they do. That radio station does not belong to the party. I asked for a clarification from the DN, and Major Henry Ruiz, who is treasurer, responded that the radio does not belong to the FSLN. Consequently, I assume that it is a private radio station and that its owners—I do not know who they are—are the proper ones to answer for what the radio station says. Consequently, if it takes a divisionist attitude, an attitude that does not contribute to party unity, then that is the responsibility of the owners, not the DN or the FSLN, because they do not own it. That must be made quite clear.

[Carlos Guadamuz, director of "Radio Ya"] I was happy to hear Dr. Sergio Ramirez say he would like to be on "Radio Ya." For several days now, I have been trying to start a debate between the different factions and I am inviting him to come tomorrow or the day after tomorrow during prime time. It would be an enormous pleasure and source of pride to have Dr. Ramirez with us on "Radio Ya."

[Ramirez] I am truly very happy to hear that tone of voice because it is not the same (perhaps it is not the same person) as the one that for days has been directing insults, lies, and slander at me. As a Christian, I forgive them because the Christian faith teaches us to forgive. I would merely ask Carlos Guadamuz to allow me to go first to Masatepe Cemetery to consult with my brother Rogelio, with whom I sometimes talk at his tomb because he continues to be my faithful adviser, about whether I should accept the invitation to speak on "Radio Ya." I will reply when I have spoken with Rogelio.

I do not refuse to speak on any broadcasting station, particularly those claiming to be identified with my party. However, what I refuse to accept is that an invitation to speak on a station that previously heaped insults on me should then serve as a justification without first uttering a word of apology for those lies and insults. For example, it has been said that I betrayed Carlos Fonseca, something I cannot accept as mere words or verbal excesses. These are very heavy charges that wound me deeply because I have always defended my political honesty. I cannot therefore yield to such schemes or, as we say in Nicaragua, use such "ways out."

Panama

Endara Assails U.S. Remarks on Antidrug Fight

PA0704174594 Panama City Radio KW Continente in Spanish 1528 GMT 7 Apr 94

[Interview with President Guillermo Endara by Jenny Lee Martinez and Manuel Fernandez from the Bridge of the Americas in Panama City on 7 April—live relay]

[Text] [Martinez] President Endara dedicated the widening of the Panama-Arraijanj Highway today. Before the dedication, President Endara commented on U.S. accusations that Panama is not doing enough to fight drug trafficking. The U.S. Government accused the Panamanian justice system of releasing drug traffickers. Here is President Endara's response:

[Endara] [Words indistinct] how many drug traffickers it does not free? It frees hundreds, even thousands, of drug traffickers. The Panamanian judicial branch—the United States Government had better get this from now on—is not controlled by the executive branch, as it is not in the United States. The U.S. justice system frees many more drug traffickers [words indistinct] the Panamanian justice system.

[Fernandez] Do you suggest [words indistinct]?

[Endara] The U.S. justice system?

[Fernandez] [Words indistinct].

[Endara] Why don't they talk about corruption in the United States? They free more drug traffickers than Panama. Why do they accuse us Panamanians? Why is our justice system charged with corruption if it frees two drug traffickers? Why don't they talk about corruption over there?

[Unidentified reporter] [Words indistinct]

[Endara] I am not justifying the acquittal of any drug trafficker. What I am saying is, no matter what the United States does, the executive branch will not intervene in matters concerning the judicial branch. The

executive branch will not intervene in the judicial branch. If the judicial branch frees someone, we will free that person because the decision concerns the judicial branch per the same policy President Clinton follows vis-a-vis the U.S. judicial branch whenever it decides to free a drug trafficker. If President Clinton respects and heeds the U.S. justice system, I want to tell President Clinton I also respect and heed my justice system.

[Reporter] [Words indistinct]

[Endara] [Word indistinct] we will continue the task. This is a momentary [words indistinct]. For now, we will follow the same path.

[Martinez] There will be a lack of U.S. cooperation.

[Endara] If they do not want to cooperate, we can do nothing about it. They are the ones who consume th drug, and they are the ones who have created a problem for us in Panama. The most consumption takes place in the United States. Because the drug passes through here, some of it remains in Panama, and it affects our youths. If they do not help us, what can we do?

Foreign Minister: U.S. Official's Comments 'Vague'

PA0704164894 Panama City LA ESTRELLA DE PANAMA in Spanish 7 Apr 94 p 40

[Report by Esteban Huertas G.]

[Text] "The statements by Robert Gelbard, U.S. deputy assistant secretary of state for inter-American affairs, are vague and ambiguous when he says Panama is a drug money-laundering center," Foreign Minister Jose Raul Mulino said yesterday. Mulino said: "Gelbard's statements are not specific and shed no light on the faults committed by Panamanian authorities."

The foreign minister said that "the administration's report does not give names and places where the illegalities occur." Mulino said: "The case to which the document alluded was the raid on the Gil Cafe Company, but added there was no sustaining evidence in the fact." [sentence as published]

For his part, Supreme Court Magistrate Jose Manuel Faundes cited "the strange U.S. attitude of discrediting Panama's image before the concert of nations." Faundes stressed the national authorities' cooperation against drug trafficking, a situation that can be brought up in the face of any accusation on the part of the United States." [no opening quotation mark as published] The magistrate said: "Panamanian international financial centers have controlled money laundering, something to which U.S. banks can attest."

A U.S. delegation is visiting the country and being escorted by Olegario Barrelier, president of the National Banking Association (ABN). This visit will last until 11 April, according to Barrelier's agenda.

Drug Control Chairman: U.S. Responsible for Problems

PA0704151494 Panama City LA PRENSA in Spanish 7 Apr 94 p 5A

[Report by Vilma E. Figueroa B.]

[Text] Carlos Felipe Escobar, chairman of the Legislative Assembly Drug Control and Eradication Committee, believes the United States is also responsible for the existing drug problems in Panama because the Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty (MLAT) was approved two years ago, but the U.S. Senate still has not ratified it.

Three days ago, Robert Gelbard, U.S. deputy assistant secretary of state for inter-American affairs, said Panama has become a "very important" center for the laundering narcodollars. This prompted the Panamanian Government to prepare a protest note which will be delivered this week to the authorities of President Clinton's administration.

"MLAT is shelved because there are senators who have been unwilling to approve the treaty, which would permit both countries (Panama and the United States) to conduct operations to counter the drug problem," the president of the assembly's drug committee said.

For his part, Rodrigo Arosemena, former customs director, said the Panamanian authorities have countered drug trafficking but if the U.S. authorities do not want to accept this fact, they should offer proof.

Candidate Galindo on Antidrug Struggle

PA0704170194 Panama City LA ESTRELLA DE PANAMA in Spanish 7 Apr 94 p A2

[Report by Ruben Dario Diaz]

[Text] Yesterday, Samuel Lewis Galindo, presidential candidate of the "National Consensus Alliance," said the United States has assumed an irresponsible attitude by saying Panama has not cooperated in the antidrug-trafficking struggle. Galindo said efforts are being made in Panama to cooperate in the antidrug-trafficking struggle, and the United States has exaggerated in saying the contrary. "We are all intent on ending drug trafficking and money laundering once and for all in our country because it is difficult to say it will end, but it is incorrect to say nothing has been done," he said.

The presidential candidate said there are authorities who are trying to fight narcotrafficking, but he added there are groups of criminals who attempt to evade the security system because Panama is a country with long coastlines on both oceans, which makes it even more difficult to control.

Galindo also mentioned the charges against the former government. He said Panamanians cannot live permanently in the past but must learn from experiences from

the past and look to the future; otherwise, "we will be living in the past, and the future will be the one that is lost."

Peru Resumes Diplomatic Relations

PA0804010994 Panama City Circuito RPC Television in Spanish 2300 GMT 7 Apr 94

[From the "RPC Television News" newscast]

[Text] The Governments of Panama and Peru mutually agreed to resume diplomatic relations, according to a Panamanian Foreign Ministry communique. The communique states that the decision was made following Foreign Minister Jose Mulino's visit to Peru. Both nations made the decision following a discussion during Mulino's visit of the historical ties uniting them, their traditional ties of friendship, and the noble goal of Latin American integration.

Candidates Agree on Need for 'Humane Economy'

PA0804000794 Panama City Circuito RPC Television in Spanish 2300 GMT 4 Apr 94

[Report by Ciro Ortega from the "RPC Television News" newscast]

[Text] Five of the seven presidential candidates agreed today on the need to develop a more humane economy. This was the most relevant point of the Second National Meeting on Unity and Human Development.

The activity to support the Panamanian democratic process was promoted by the United Nations and took place at the Marriott Hotel in the capital. At this Second National Meeting on Unity and Human Development, presidential candidates Ruben Dario Carles of the Change '94 Alliance, Samuel Lewis Galindo of the National Consensus Alliance, Jose Salvador Munoz of the Doctrinaire Panamenist Party, Ernesto Perez Balladares of the United People Alliance, and Eduardo Vallarino of the Christian Democratic Party had the opportunity to present their main political ideas.

The candidates agreed on the need to strengthen democracy through politics aimed at the less-favored segments of the population by emphasizing education, health, and employment. They also stressed the need to put the reverted areas to use and to strengthen the transfer of the interoceanic waterway to Panamanian hands.

The event was attended by the former presidents of Uruguay and Colombia, Drs. Julio Maria Sanguinetti and Belisario Betancur, respectively, representing the international community. Meanwhile, Fernando Zumbado, UN assistant secretary general and program director for Latin America, praised the degree of maturity displayed by what is being called an state agenda for the country's future. He pointed out that similar events will be held after 8 May to improve the quality of and conditions for the transition between the current and future government.

Former Colombian President Belisario Betancur emphasized that the plans that were presented are close to what Panama needs.

[Begin Betancur recording] I was candidate for the presidency of Colombia four times. Thus, I was coprotagonist in four electoral processes, and I know that each electoral process involves uneasiness and, at times, abuses. Once the elections are over, however, this becomes ancient history, not even recent history. Ancient history because vast possibilities are opened for the future. And I think that Panamanians are searching for solutions to their own problems in a normal, constructive, and creative manner. [end recording]

Betancur pointed out that government policies must be stongly humane to help the downtrodden.

Argentina

Menem Harshly Criticizes Blank Vote Campaign

PY0704233794 Buenos Aires NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS in Spanish 0056 GMT 7 Apr 94

[Text] Santiago del Estero, 6 Apr (NA)—Today, President Carlos Menem harshly criticized the parties that are urging Argentines to cast blank votes in the 10 April elections. He asserted it was time for people "to decide on whether to be hot or cold, as God will spew forth those who are lukewarm."

Yesterday, similar to what happened in Cordoba Province, the head of state once again called on citizens to turn out in massive number at the polls to elect Constituent Assembly members. Menem defended the advantages of the constitutional reform during a political tour he made of Frias, La Banda, and the city of Santiago del Estero to prop up the electoral possibilities for the Justicialist Party [PJ] in the provinces.

The president arrived in Santiago del Estero this morning from Cordoba, accompanied by Education Minister Jorge Rodriguez, Tucuman Governor Ramon Ortega, and National Mortgage Bank President Adelina Dalesio de Viola. He was welcomed at the airport by Santiago del Estero federal trustee Juan Schiaretti. He then flew to the city of Frias, which is located 175 km from here, where he later presided over a party rally. Menem delivered a speech at this rally, which was held in the 25 de Mayo Square in front of the town hall, after Schiaretti.

Menem sharply reprimanded those who are campaigning for the blank vote. Once again, he exhorted citizens to turn out in massive numbers to vote on 10 April because "now is the time to take a firm stand" to keep abreast of our country's transformation process. During his address, the head of state stressed that "the time has come to turn to the Biblical expression: As you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, God will spew you forth. Lukewarmness is not a viable choice. This is why I do not understand how some politicians can be campaigning in favor of the blank vote," he stressed before asking "what is the value of a blank vote at a time when one has to stake everything on our homeland?"

Menem harshly reprimanded those who criticize the agreement signed with the Radical Civic Union [UCR]. He stated: "More than 70 percent of Argentines are included in the pact," as they are represented by the two leading political parties in the country, the PJ and the UCR. He recalled that "six constitutional amendments were made in the past without there ever being a consensus by the majority parties." He deemed that "it is of paramount importance to reformulate the current legislation in this transformation process Argentina is undergoing."

The president then conceded that "these are not easy times." He nonetheless warned that "there was no other way but to apply the model and the proposal that is under way in order to lift Argentina out of its stagnation." He noted that "40, 50 years ago, the Argentine Republic was counted as one of the 10 best countries in the world. We are now rated as No. 16. I intend to once again occupy the position we used to have," he remarked. He also insisted that with regard to GDP, Argentina "is the country that has registered the greatest growth in the western world over the last three years, and comes in third within the world context after the PRC and Thailand."

Menem then devoted several minutes to the particular question of Frias in alluding to the building of sewage lines, the possible establishment of a free trade zone, the building of the Federal Channel which will provide water to three northwestern provinces, and the canalization of the Bermejo River.

After the rally, the head of state returned to this capital and got on a bus to travel to La Banda. There, at the Olimpia Club, he participated in a ceremony to dedicate 122 homes in the Ramon Taboada neighborhood. During the evening, Menem attended a ceremony at the Juventud Club where he made several announcements of strictly local interest. Later, he presided over a political rally to close the PJ's election campaign at the intersection of Belgrano and Leon Gallo Streets.

Menem's visit to Santiago del Estero Province coincided with a strike of physicians, teachers, and civil servants united in ATE [Association of State Workers], which the previous day had declared him "persona non grata." Today, ATE Chairperson Alba Luna de Castillo stated Menem was given "an icy welcome." She emphasized that "there was nobody at the airport because today is a day of mourning for Santiago del Estero residents." Moreover, she engaged in a vitriolic attack on Schiaretti, saying that "he spends province funds on political rallies" and "has done nothing to solve the problems affecting our public administration."

Political Parties Close 10 Apr Election Campaign

PY0704232794 Madrid EFE in Spanish 0609 GMT 7 Apr 94

[Text] Buenos Aires, 7 Apr (EFE)—Argentine political parties will close their political campaign today in the midst of widespread indifference. On 10 April, citizens will elect 305 members of a Constituent Assembly that will be responsible for reforming the Constitution.

Numerous radio and television surveys indicate that a good percentage of Argentine citizens are not aware of what is involved in the reform except that it will permit President Carlos Menem to run for reelection. Other surveys indicate that more than 25 percent of eligible voters will not vote despite the fact that voting is compulsory, or they will submit blank votes, as during the 3 October 1993 legislative election.

Yesterday, former President Raul Alfonsin, candidate for the Radical Civic Union (UCR) in Buenos Aires Province, asked people to vote for his party "to make sure that the Constitution will be a guarantee of justice and security for all." Carlos Menem, in turn, presided over a ceremony in Santiago del Estero during which he called on citizens to vote for the party of their liking and not submit blank votes, as blank votes "are of no use."

The progress made by the center-left coalition Grand Front (FG) in the Argentine capital, where surveys place it behind the ruling Justicialist Party (Peronist) and ahead of the UCR, has been the significant event of the two weeks leading up to the election.

The FG is headed by Deputy Carlos Alvarez, a dissident Peronist who has occupied the most important sections in local newspapers over the last few months because according to observers, he is the Argentine leader who understands best that political campaigns must be carried out in the communications media.

Over the past few days, Menem and Alfonsin have defended the agreement the two leaders signed at the end of 1993 to have a project for reforming the Constitution approved by Congress. Their remarks were aimed at accusations made by other parties' candidates that "the pact" was signed behind the people's back.

The Peronists and Radicals association opened a deep breach between them and the other political groups which are also fighting for votes.

Jesus Rodriguez, who is in first place on the UCR ticket for the capital, said "people know the UCR alone can control Menem's growing power," and called on citizens "to concentrate votes for the opposition."

Fernando "Pino" Solanas, Argentine actor and candidate for the FG, proposed the election of Neuquen's emeritus bishop, Monsignor Jaime de Nevares, as Constituent Assembly president. De Nevares left his provincial diocese when he turned 75, at the beginning of the year. He will be the main speaker today at the FG campaign closing act in a Buenos Aires theater. The prelate was one of the few leaders who maintained a critical position against the political repression unleashed by the military regime (1976-83). He has also criticized the market economy system Menem adopted ever since he came to power in 1989.

Economy Minister Says 'No Possibility' of Resigning

PY0704224094 Buenos Aires BUENOS AIRES HERALD in English 7 Apr 94 p 3

[Text] (NA-DYN)—Yesterday, Economy Minister Domingo Cavallo said there was no possibility of him resigning while at the same time denying that the peso would be devalued and recessive policies would be applied to increase exports. He did say, however, that to achieve this the current consumption rate should be reduced.

Speaking at the American Club yesterday to a group of businessmen, Cavallo said he does not foresee President Carlos Menem asking for his resignation in the near future. He also added: "I am not thinking about resigning, I will carry on for a long time, I hope."

He repeated, however, that should this event take place "there will surely by an economic team as good if not better than the present one." Cavallo even went one step further and added that "if, for example, the Radical Party win the next elections, they will not do what (Raul) Alfonsin tells them, rather they will field a much better team than us and manage the economy just as we are doing."

Cavallo insisted that "one day" he would "cease to be a minister" but "there would be no discontinuity in President Carlos Menem's administration." Continuing on this issue he said: "President Menem's government will probably continue until 1999 and he guessed that "I will probably continue at the head of this Ministry. If I were not here or were only heading a partial Ministry, then whoever replaced me would not stop the work being done or propose a different team, but would complete the reorganization task," Cavallo added.

Cavallo also said that now that the US economy is picking up those dollars that are not injected into the capital markets "should be obtained in exchange for our exports." He said that recessionary measures or a devaluation are not the way to increase production, rather investments," Cavallo added.

Cavallo also admitted that to encourage exports, "more favourable relative prices are needed than there have been in the last three years." He pointed out that these will be achieved by "working on the service prices, all production costs, and the tax systems that distort companies expenses."

During his speech Cavallo lashed out at Bolsa Stock Exchange President Jorge Berrardi his "lack of professionalism and seriousness in the statements he made. Berrardi had criticized the 3.75-percent commission the banks charged in the repurchase of YPF shares as excessive. "With these sort of opinions, how are we going to have a stable market?" Cavallo wondered.

Roundup of Economic Reports

PY0804012994

[Editorial Report] The following is a compilation of reports on economic activities monitored through 7 April.

Tax collection in March fell 4 percent with respect to February, and 3.7 percent with respect to the estimate for the month. Official sources state that 3.57 billion pesos was the target, while only 3.44 billion were

received. This sum is nevertheless 11.2 percent above the figure for March 1993. (Buenos Aires BUENOS AIRES HERALD in English 5 Apr 94 p 5)

The government's railway privatization policy picked up steam on 1 April, when the Belgrano Norte and San Martin metropolitan rail services were handed over to their new operators. The Belgrano Norte line was handed over to Ferrovias SAC, which will run the railway for the next 10 years. Ferrovias will be receiving government subsidies of $150 million over the life of the concession to make new investments.

The San Martin line will be run by the Transportes Metropolitanos Gral San Martin SA consortium (TMS). The new operators will have to invest $70 million during the 10-year concession with government subsidies of $10.9 million. (Buenos Aires BUENOS AIRES HERALD in English 2 Apr 94 p 5)

The World Bank and the Economy Ministry signed loan agreements for $3.3 billion covering the next three years. The loans will cover food, child education, reform of the provincial economies, and the environment. According to Economy Ministry sources, $800 million will be spent on bringing the provincial economies up to date, and $750 million for education and rural poverty plans. The funds will be administered by the World Bank. (Buenos Aires BUENOS AIRES HERALD in English 2 Apr 94 p 5)

According to data disclosed today by the National Institute of Statistics and Census, the Consumer Price Index was up by 0.1 percent in March, while wholesale prices and construction costs rose by 0.2 percent. Retail prices have edged up by 5.2 percent over the last 12 months. Accrued inflation since the Argentine peso was pegged to the U.S. dollar is 53.2 percent. (Buenos Aires NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS in Spanish 1957 GMT 6 Apr 94)

Bolivia

DEA 'Removed' Trafficker's Aide to Costa Rica

PY0704224294 La Paz Television Nacional Network in Spanish 1700 GMT 6 Apr 94

[Text] We will now read a news agency report that confirms what this newscast previously reported. It states that Isaac Oso Chavarria's assistant, Edgar Fernandez Lazcano, has been clandestinely and illegally removed from the country by DEA agents. The news agency report states:

The U.S. antinarcotics agency has excused itself before the Costa Rican Government for not having warned of the transit through Costa Rica of a Bolivian citizen who testified that former Bolivian President Jaime Paz Zamora is linked to a drug trafficker.

Costa Rican Security Minister Luis Fishman reported that the DEA cited urgency in its letter as the reason for not having informed the Costa Rican Government of the arrival of Edgar Fernandez Lazcano in Costa Rica.

Fernandez Lazcano, who was on his way to Miami on 3 April, again reported in Costa Rica that last week—during a long testimony before Bolivian Prosecutor Leopoldo Ramos Herrada—he revealed the alleged links between former Bolivian President Jaime Paz Zamora and drug trafficker Isaac Oso Chavarria.

Fernandez Lazcano, who was clandestinely removed from Bolivia by land via Peru, was detained by chance by OIJ [Investigation Agency] agents in downtown San Jose during a drug enforcement operation. Following consultations, the Bolivian prosecutor and Drug Enforcement Officer Ruben Zegada Portugal asked for permission to question him in conjunction with Costa Rican officials.

Government Silent Over Incident

PY0804021294 La Paz Television Nacional Network in Spanish 1700 GMT 7 Apr 94

[Text] The government refuses to clarify the mysterious manner in which Edgar Fernandez Lazcano, assistant to Isaac Oso Chavarria, traveled to Costa Rica to be questioned by the DEA.

Justice Minister Rene Blattman says he has no information about this case, which is being investigated by the Ministry of Government. He also does not know whether or not Edgar Fernandez Lazcano was forbidden to leave the country. The minister said, however, this is not very important, as anyone in Bolivia can disobey the prohibition on leaving the country and get out of Bolivia. The migration under secretary certainly did not like Blattman's statement.

[Begin recording] [Unidentified migration under secretary] Did the justice minister say that? Well, he must send me a list of the names of people who left the country during my administration in defiance of an order to remain.

[Unidentified corresponedent] Was Fernandez Lazcano prohibited from leaving the country?

[Under secretary] Fernandez Lazcano? No, he received no order prohibiting him from leaving the country. Until the moment he left—because it is not known when he left the country—there was no order prohibiting him from leaving the country. [end recording]

If Fernandez Lazcano was not forbidden from leaving the country, he could have left the country legally, with a passport. The migration office says he did not use it:

[Begin under secretary recording] I can tell you that his departure was not registered in any airport controlled by the Migration Undersecretariat. The only thing I can tell you is that if he left the country he may have left using one of the many methods used by people linked to drug trafficking, through clandestine air strips or by land. [end recording]

Meanwhile, the president of the Republic has met with several ministers to discuss this subject, and it has been reported that in the next few hours a communique will be released to the public explaining how Edgar Fernandez Lazcano left Bolivia.

In turn, the DEA was criticized in political circles for kidnapping Edgar Fernandez Lazcano to question him in Costa Rica. Bolivian congressmen agree that the DEA owes an explanation to Bolivia.

[Begin Deputy Fernando Kieffer Guzman recording] Yes, of course, I think they acted excessively and arbitrarily, which must be countered as soon as possible; otherwise, this will unnecessarily affect U.S.-Bolivian relations, as there was no real reason for this action. The two objectives sought by the DEA in this case could have been met: that Fernandez Lazcano be a witness in court, and also in the lawsuits that are being followed in the United States. Right? Yet this was a precipitate, clumsy action. It was an abuse. [end recording]

MNR [Nationalist Revolutionary Movement] Deputy Fernando Campero said that in the case of Edgar Fernandez Lazcano, Bolivian sovereignty is being trampled upon.

[Begin Campero recording] The amendment approved some time ago by the U.S. Congress, which authorizes the kidnapping of individuals linked to drug trafficking even without the knowledge or coordination with the officials of the foreign country, represents an offense to the dignity of our countries. I think that in this joint struggle carried out by the United States and all the countries against this scourge of drug trafficking, we should seek mechanisms of coordination and mutual respect. [end recording]

So far, neither the Ministry of Foreign Affairs nor the Ministry of Government have made statements on this sensitive subject.

Brazil

Numbers Game Probe Implicates Collor, Maluf

PY0804015994 Rio de Janeiro Rede Globo Television in Portuguese 2300 GMT 7 Apr 94

[Excerpts] Rio de Janeiro District Attorney Antonio Carlos Biscaia has released an official list of 150 people charged with receiving bribes from numbers game operators. Former President Fernando Collor de Mello and Sao Paulo Mayor Paulo Maluf are on the list. [passage omitted]

In addition to Collor and Maluf, the list includes Rio de Janeiro Governor Nilo Batista and Deputy Cleto Falcao. Next to the names of Collor and Maluf are entries indicating that they received donations to their 1989 electoral campaign. There are also documents indicating that donations were made for a rally of then-candidate Paulo Maluf in Rio de Janeiro.

Sao Paulo Mayor Paulo Maluf has denied the charge that the numbers game operators made donations to his electoral campaign. He vowed to press charges against Biscaia.

[Begin Maluf recording] This is an individual who is hysterically trying to get into the limelight. He is just an impetuous, irresponsible rascal, and he is lying. I have never received any help from anyone. I have put the case in the hands of criminal lawyer Enio de Bastos Barros, who will bring this irresponsible individual to court. [end recording]

Collor also issued a statement denying he received any donations to his campaign from kingpins of the numbers game. The former president contends that he fought the numbers game during his tenure as governor of Alagoas State. He adds that he was already found not guilty in the investigation of his accounts during the impeachment process. He concludes by stating that his executioners have already testified to the fact that he has never received one cent from the illegal game he tenaciously fought as governor. [passage omitted]

Federal prosecutors who are participating in the Rio de Janeiro district attorney's investigations are increasingly convinced that the numbers game was nothing but a front for more lucrative businesses, such as arms smuggling and the international drug trade.

The prosecutors were quite impressed by the volume of transactions maintained by numbers game operators with some South American countries, such as the ties numbers game kingpin Rodomiro Garcia maintained with one of the most notorious Paraguayan smugglers, [Governor of Alto Parana Department] Carlos Barreto Sarubbi.

Rodomiro Garcia and Barreto Sarubbi own a casino in Ciudad del Este, Paraguay, across the border from Foz do Iguacu. Garcia also owns a large estate in Paraguay, approximately 10 km from the Brazilian border. Barreto owns an airstrip. He has been charged by U.S. police with having used the airstrip for many years for arms smuggling and drug trafficking operations.

Roundup of Economic Reports

PY0804004394

[Editorial Report] The following is a compilation of reports on economic activities monitored through 7 April.

The increase in interest rates on the U.S. market, and the expectations that this rate will continue to grow, has prompted foreign investors to withdraw approximately $1 billion from the Brazilian stock market in one week. The decision has also affected the Brazilian foreign debt, as higher interest will make debt certificates more expensive. (Sao Paulo FOLHA DE SAO PAULO in Portuguese 5 Apr 94 Section 2 p 1)

The Sao Paulo stock market yesterday registered its sharpest drop of the year (10.5 percent), with losses estimated at between $12 and $16.5 billion. This drop was prompted by a U.S. Federal Reserve decision to increase interest rates. According to Citibank, on 29 March the stock market value stood at $132 billion, a loss of $16.5 billion. Fibra Bank director Julio Krauspenhar estimated the loss at $12 billion. (Sao Paulo O ESTADO DE SAO PAULO in Portuguese 5 Apr 94 p B3)

The Sao Paulo State Federation of Industries, FIESP, and the Sao Paulo State Industries Center has reported that the Sao Paulo industrial activity level dropped by 1.5 percent in February in comparison with January. Industrial activity in February has nonetheless increased by 3.6 percent in comparison with the same month last year. The use of installed industrial capacity climbed from 75.1 percent in January to 75.3 percent in February. Meanwhile, real sales of electric-electronic and communications materials increased by 65.7 percent, mechanical capital goods and agricultural machinery sales increased by 15.2 percent, car industry sales increased by 11.7 percent, furniture sales increased 9.6 percent, and metalworks sales by 9.5 percent in January 1994 in comparison with January 1993. In all, sales of Sao Paulo industry dropped in February by 0.4 percent in comparison with the previous month, which is still 4.6 percent more than the sales registered in February 1993. The hours worked in February in the industry sector dropped by 1.5 percent in comparison with January, and the average real salary increased by 3.9 percent, while the salary mass increased by 1.6 percent on real terms. (Sao Paulo GAZETA MERCANTIL in Portuguese 31 Mar p 10)

Chile

Accord Reached With EU on Fruit Exports

PY0804024194 Santiago EL MERCURIO in Spanish 24 Mar 94 pp A1, A7

[Article by Geneva Correspondent Ana Fernandez]

[Excerpts] A bilateral agreement was signed yesterday between Chile and the European Union (EU) on the controversy over Chile's exports of apples and other fruits. The move ends a year of anxiety and negotiations. The initial bilateral negotiation was followed by others within the GATT, where a panel was set up after the EU imposed countervailing duties in April 1993.

Ernesto Tironi, the Chilean Ambassador to Geneva who receives the kudos for this agreement, labeled this process as "laborious" and told EL MERCURIO that it entailed a race against time. "The agreement was ready on 8 March and it was practically closed on 17 March," he added.

He explained that the agreement entails both a change in the way the EU calculates the countervailing duties and a reduction in EU tariffs on Chilean apples and other fruits. In exchange for this, Chile suspended its protest before the GATT which had established a panel presided by Swedish Ambassador to GATT Christer Manhusen and included representatives of Mexico and Pakistan.

This agreement will be instrumental in boosting Chile's export earnings. Tironi stated: "A surplus in the European production of apples last year, coupled with a 10 percent increase in tariffs—up from 6 to 16 percent—caused exports of Chilean apples to drop by 40 percent." [passage omitted]

A Foreign Ministry communique states that the countervailing duties which affected Chile last year will be replaced by another, less restrictive, more transparent, and more predictable system. This was negotiated within the framework of the Uruguay Round of GATT trade talks. This new tariff system will apply to all Chilean fruits, not just to apples.

The communique adds that within the framework of the Uruguay Round, Chile managed to increase the selling price of its apples from 8 to 12 percent [as published] without being penalized by extremely high additional customs duties. This measure will become effective in July 1995.

The agreement also includes clauses to make the EU system that limits the entry of fruit less severe when there are exceptional market conditions. For example, countervailing duties will not be levied when sales volumes are very small.

The communique adds that the agreement includes a commitment for closer cooperation between Chile and the EU on the exchange of information about fruit market conditions. The agreement states: "The information provided by the Exporters' Association is of utmost importance for the fulfillment of the cooperation commitment." [passage omitted]

Figueroa Details Foreign Policy Highlights

PY0704174394 Santiago Radio Cooperativa Network in Spanish 1100 GMT 7 Apr 94

[Text] Chilean Foreign Minister Carlos Figueroa has stated that Chile seeks to strengthen its bilateral ties with the United States; and, within this framework, negotiating a free trade agreement is a priority issue for the Chilean Government. He added that an inter-ministerial team will be established to negotiate a bilateral treaty or Chile's inclusion in NAFTA. Here is a report by Carmen Castro:

[Begin Castro recording] Foreign Minister Carlos Figueroa said the Chilean Government seeks to consolidate its ties with the United States at all levels. Figueroa said the Chilean Government's overall foreign policy guidelines grant particular importance to the strengthening of its ties with neighboring countries, the United States, and Asia.

Within this framework and on the basis of the new international order, Carlos Figueroa stated that Chilean

policy toward Latin America should be fully compatible with a greater insertion in North American markets.

According to Carlos Figueroa, the Chilean Government grants great importance to negotiating a free trade agreement with the United States at either the bilateral level or within the framework of NAFTA, an alternative which is being deeply studied at the Foreign Ministry. He said there is an imperative need to establish a solid interministerial negotiating team that will act in a coordinated and coherent manner to this effect.

Carlos Figueroa also stated Chile faces the challenge of consolidating its bilateral ties with the Untied States at all levels. Figueroa said the strengthening of Chilean-U.S. ties is not restricted to negotiating a free trade agreement but includes other important issues like the defense of democracy, the nonproliferation of weapons of mass destruction, the struggle against trafficking, the insertion of Chile among the Pacific rim countries, and other multilateral issues. Figueroa stated that, beside constituting relevant issues by themselves, the latter may have a considerable influence on Chile's ability to negotiate the free trade agreement.

Figueroa said Europe continues to be a relevant area for Chilean foreign policy but he placed a special emphasis on Asia. Figueroa said an opening within the Asian-Pacific region constitutes one of the main focal point of Chilean foreign policy. He added that the Pacific Basin is undoubtedly one of the most important international scenarios of the future. This region encompasses over 40 interrelated countries, with a population surpassing 2.5 billion and an economic power concentrating over half of the World's production. Figueroa stated that the Asian-Pacific region has experienced the greatest economic growth and has achieved the greatest economic dynamism over the past few decades. The economies of Pacific-rim countries, he stressed, have played a key role in inserting Chile in the new international scenario. [end recording]

Plant Health Accord Opens PRC Market

PY0704122394 Santiago LA TERCERA DE LA HORA in Spanish 26 Mar 94 Economic Section p 1

[Excerpts] Yesterday, Chile became the second country of the Americas, after the United States, to export fruit to China. The Agricultural and Livestock Service (SAG) signed a plant health agreement with the PRC Agriculture Ministry National Animal and Plant Quarantine Service which opens the Chinese market to Chilean fruit. Exports will include apples and kiwi fruit grown in the sixth and ninth region where the fruit fly has never been reported.

The signing ceremony was attended by the PRC ambassador to Chile and Agriculture Under Secretary Alejandro Gutierrez. The agreement was described as a major step toward opening the market to Chilean fruit. A PRC agricultural technical mission has been in Chile since 14 March and the agreement was concluded after two weeks of talks. [passage omitted]

Gutierrez said "Sino-Chilean trade has grown to $400 million. This is proof of the purchasing power of the Chinese market, which consists of 1.2 billion people whose income is rapidly increasing." He added that the agreement stems from the fruitful relations existing between the two countries and from a trade agreement signed by the two countries in 1990 during the visit of then President Patricio Aylwin. [passage omitted]

Opening of U.S. FBI Office Discussed Again

PY0704150094 Santiago EL MERCURIO in Spanish 27 Mar 94 pp A1, A20

[Article by Cony Stipicic]

[Text] The subject of the FBI in our country has become nearly as untouchable as its detectives were years ago. The news that Chile had asked the United States to open an FBI liaison office in Chile caused considerable impact last year. The debate extended to many sectors. Politicians, police, and government officials spoke about the controversial subject. Some people even qualified the initiative as interference in Chilean domestic affairs. It is said that Washington was surprised by this reaction and preferred not to touch the subject in public in order not to continue creating a flurry.

The problem is that nowadays, no one or very few people know what will happen with this initiative. Before leaving, the Patricio Aylwin administration said everything was status quo and opening a FBI office depended on the dedication of a new U.S. Embassy building. The current administration has not made a decision yet on the matter but everything indicates that it will stay the same. That is, the FBI will come.

Neither Carabineros nor the Investigative Police have coordinated meetings yet with the eventual "liaison" officers, even though they will be work colleagues. Meanwhile, the U.S. Embassy is totally silent on the subject. "There is nothing new," is all they say. And when one tells the Embassy that we are not asking for news but for the date when the new Embassy building will be ready, all the Embassy answers is that it probably will be ready by the middle of next year, without further details.

Something more concrete, however, was learned. The FBI already has assigned the "individual" who will work in the office that will be opened in Santiago. It will be only one agent. There will not be two, three, or four agents like it was once said. Unofficially, it was revealed that the number of agents interested in being transferred to Santiago was far greater than expected, something that had not happened in a long time in an American institution.

The U.S. State Department and the Chilean Interior Ministry still must take some joint steps. Apparently, the

two institutions have not discussed the subject lately, after it was announced by former Minister Enrique Krauss on 16 July 1993.

As vice president of the Republic, Krauss then said the purpose of asking for the opening of an FBI office in Chile was only to strengthen cooperation between the Chilean forces of order and the FBI in the struggle against international crime.

Maximum Alert

One of the people who expressed a warning on the subject noted that Chile is becoming—due to its economic development—an attractive country for international traffickers and other types of criminals. This would make it necessary to reinforce the Chilean police by increasing its operational capability instead of creating a situation that would demand the participation of foreign agents. But this will not be the case because the U.S. agents will not have any power to operate. The Chilean law, like those in every other country of the world, prevents foreign agents from operating in territory other than their own country. Their task, therefore, will be merely to exchange information in addition to granting technical and academic support.

There were also protests from those who feared the fact would be misinterpreted by Chilean police in the sense that FBI agents were being brought to Chile because things were not being done properly here. While some politicians tried to minimize the issue, others tried to explain the government's true purpose to the Chilean people: That it did not aspire to have agents with operational capability in Chile; that the idea was to have an FBI agent who would allow for a more fluid and expeditious relationship between the security forces; that bringing an FBI agent did not represent interference in domestic affairs; and that by no means did it reveal a government weakness in its struggle against drug trafficking.

Everything boiled down to a mere discussion until a group of National Renewal legislators decided to ask the government to withdraw its invitation to the FBI. They argued that the initiative violated the law currently in force and national sovereignty because, according to the Constitution, Carabineros and the Investigative Police are in charge of safeguarding domestic order.

The government was indignant and Krauss said it was "great insolence" to believe that the Chilean Government and police institutions could be manipulated by foreign interests.

But those directly affected were barely consulted on the subject. Carabineros, through Director General Rodolfo Stange, at first reacted negatively, although in an indirect manner. A few days later, however, Carabineros suggested it might view this initiative as positive for cooperation in the police field. Carabineros, though, still has not disclosed its official stance on the issue.

The opinions within this force are varied. A Carabineros source stated those who are against the idea or choose not to state their opinion do so because they are not fully aware of the effect that a liaison with the FBI in Chile may have. Carabineros believe this difference of opinions is positive. The same person made an interesting comment: The FBI office in Santiago will not be autonomous; it will be subject to the U.S. Embassy. It will, in fact, be located in the Embassy building.

He also asserted that it is merely another of the 21 officies the FBI already has throughout the world, which is also the case of the Chilean Armed and security forces. Carabineros has attaches in some embassies, like in Spain, Colombia, the United States, and Costa Rica, as well as missions stationed in El Salvador and Ecuador, among other countries.

Between Doubts and Advantages

The Investigative Police has voiced its full support for the initiative. The thing is that its agents, for some time now, have maintained a cooperative relationship with the FBI office in Montevideo, which is in charge of coordinating actions in the Southern Cone. The FBI has four agents in Montevideo. But the distance, although short, causes certain inconveniences. The relationship is not as fluid as it should be.

Carlos Espinoza, administrative chief of the Santiago Interpol National Headquarters, said one must admit that the FBI is in the vanguard of technological developments and this is highly positive for the development of criminal investigations carried out by Chilean agents. Espinoza said: "If we reach a point in our investigations at which our resources prevent us from going any further, as has been the case, there are our FBI friends who, somehow or other, can help us complete our work." He added: "They have more technology than we do, but our human resources, the quality of our professionals, are good. When they need something they get it done properly and in time."

Carabineros also offers human resources. Their offer, however, is less specific than the offer of the Investigative Police, dedicated mainly to criminal matters. Carabineros has a greater choice of professionals.

They also point out their viewpoint of another social situation, in addition to their experience in confronting other social phenomenons in the crime field also applicable in the United States. This is the case of the struggle against delinquency in the capital's outskirts, also applicable to the actions carried out in the United States in neighborhoods or areas where different ethnic groups are gathered.

There are coincidences on the reasons why the United States may have so readily accepted the Chilean Government request to install an FBI office here. Basically, tney refer to the degree of economic development reached by Chile, which makes it increasingly vulnerable to the much-talked-about "internationalization of

crime." In other words, that important foreign delinquents increasingly choose Chile in which to commit their crimes or hide.

In view of this situation and the globalization phenomenon the world is experiencing in all fields of action, few see the purpose of denying the existence of a liaison with U.S. police in Chile. A person linked to this issue commented: "We cannot close our borders if there is a tendency toward rapprochement and international police cooperation throughout the world," and added, "why would we hesitate before crime if it can only be fought by working."

There are some who believe one must suspect the U.S. attitude to readily accept the request. Some believe that "the gringos do nothing for free." But others believe there is nothing wrong with that. Police forces believe Chile also has done the right thing. Although many may say the benefits are shared, it is true that Chile will benefit even more.

Gen. Stange 'Incapable' of Remaining Carabineros Head

PY0704224694 Santiago Television Nacional de Chile Imagen internacional in Spanish 1800 GMT 7 Apr 94

[Excerpt] The government has stated that Carabineros Director General Rodolfo Stange is morally incapable of exercising his duties because of Judge Juica's ruling on the slain communist leaders. The following is a live relay by Reporter Jose Miguel Alfaro from Government House:

[Alfaro] President Frei's decision to summon General Rodolfo Stange to suggest his retirement from the Carabineros was the main issue discussed by Frei during today's cabinet meeting. We have the following report on this issue:

During the two-hour cabinet meeting the president informed his immediate advisers about the arguments he raised before the Carabineros director general.

Victor Manuel Rebolledo, minister general secretary of the government, explained that President Frei is not arguing about petty issues, but defending basic moral issues.

[Begin Rebolledo recording] What the government and the president have specified is that although General Stange has not been indicted and no sentence has been issued, the fact that he is being questioned virtually morally incapacitates him from adequately fulfilling his duties as Carabineros director general. Consequently, the Carabineros are impeded from properly fulfilling those duties established by the Constitution and the laws, and which all Chilean citizens expect to be fulfilled. [end recording]

Rebolledo said there is tension between the government and Gen. Stange, but not an institutional crisis. [passage omitted]

Colombia

Ambassador Rejects Kerry's Comments on Drugs

PA0804012294 Santa Fe de Bogota Inravision Television Cadena 1 in Spanish 0007 GMT 8 Apr 94

[Report by Raul Gutierrez from the "24 Hours" newscast]

[Text] Gabriel Silva, Colombian ambassador to Washington, has told U.S. Senator John Kerry that Colombia is not a narcodemocracy and that our economy is not controlled by drug traffickers. In a letter, Silva refutes the statements made by influential U.S. Senator John Kerry against the Colombian Government and legal system that were published in THE WASHINGTON POST.

The ambassador said: The Colombian Government has made enormous sacrifices to defend its democracy, so it is hasty to say that Colombia is a narcodemocracy.

Referring to the Cali Cartel's alleged control over some areas of the economy and media, Silva said organized crime tries to infiltrate certain areas, just as it does in the United States, but the government and legitimate businessmen in those sectors do not tolerate it.

Another part of the letter stated: The abolition of extradition is a sovereign decision made by the Constituent Assembly, elected by the people.

In conclusion, the ambassador admited that the government has and will continue to have differences with the prosecutor general, but he emphasized that government branches cooperate and are independent.

Prosecutor's Office Denies Cartel Infiltration

PA0704214094 Madrid EFE in Spanish 0118 GMT 7 Apr 94

[Text] Santa Fe de Bogota, 6 Apr (EFE)—Today, the Colombian Prosecutor General's Office rejected charges made by the U.S. State Department that the Cali Cartel has infiltrated the Colombian Government.

On 4 April, the State Department published its annual report on its global strategy to fight drugs. With regard to Colombia, the report states among other things that the mafia "still manipulates the judicial system through intimidation and bribery."

Deputy Prosecutor General Francisco Jose Sintura denied this allegation, saying that arrests, sentences, confiscations, and seizures prove the opposite is true. "Such generalities are unacceptable," Sintura stressed in a news release.

Noting the achievements made by the Prosecutor General's Office, Sintura said it is not clear to whom the report refers as a "fourth-level member of the (Colombian) Prosecutor General's Office who is under investigation for his alleged links to the Cali Cartel."

The news release says that in 1993, "Colombia extradited an alleged Argentine drug trafficker to the United States, and in 1994 extradited four citizens of other nationalities. In addition, seven others whose extradition was requested by the United States were arrested, and those cases are currently moving through the legal process."

Sintura adds that as a result of the fight against drug trafficking, 40 people linked to this crime surrendered, 30 were arrested, and 23 were killed in clashes with the authorities. The news release stresses that all of these people were "members of drug trafficking organizations, and not common criminals." Sintura's report adds that "17 top leaders of these organizations have received sentences of 10-24 years in jail."

Paraguay

Wasmosy Blames Media for Nation's Problems

PY0704153194 Asuncion NOTICIAS in Spanish 7 Apr 94 p 2

[Text] In Brussels on 6 April, President Juan Carlos Wasmosy again blamed the press for all the troubles in the country. He said the media is controlled by powerful organizations established during the previous administration.

The president said such organizations frequently do not have any mercy on the administration's need for space, adding that his government was seated only a short time ago and had to administer the many conflicts that currently are surfacing.

"My government guarantees the most absolute freedom of the press, which is controlled by powerful communications organizations that were established during the previous administration and that frequently do not have any mercy on the administration's need for space in the short time it has had to administer the many conflicts that are surfacing today," the president said.

Wasmosy read his speech during a working luncheon with European Parliament President Egon Klepsh and various European deputies.

The head of state said the method for administering conflicts in a true democracy was quite different from the methods used in the past autocracy.

Regarding the social crisis, Wasmosy told the European deputies that his government was committed to facing the social problems caused by poverty, disease, ignorance, and lack of communications in wide areas of the country with courage and determination.

Wasmosy said his government used the invaluable democratic instrument of dialogue, compromise, and agreement with opposition forces, adding that the opposition controlled both houses of Congress.

The head of state stressed that this attitude permitted them to close a pact with the opposition that will guarantee the democratic governability of the country. Wasmosy said the pact with the opposition will allow them to fulfill, in freedom, the people's long delayed and legitimate aspirations.

The president admitted that the country's economy was fragile and weak because 76 percent of the 4 million inhabitants earned their incomes from agriculture, adding that agriculture depended on the success or failure of cotton and soybean crops, which usually are affected by international markets' cyclical variations.

Italy Admits Mistakes; Debt May Be Pardoned

PY0704151894 Asuncion NOTICIAS in Spanish 7 Apr 94 pp 20, 21

[Report by unidentified special correspondent]

[Excerpt] Brussels—Industry and Commerce Minister Ubaldo Scavone told NOTICIAS yesterday that the Italian Government has finally admitted that legal mistakes were made in a $10-million loan to install a citrus company in La Colmena. The minister announced that the Paraguayan Government has thus been virtually exempted from paying the loan, which, including overdue payments and arrears interest, reportedly stands at more than $45 million.

During Stroessner's regime, the Italian Government approved a loan for Rossi Inc. which was allegedly guaranteed by its Paraguayan counterpart through fraudulent actions committed by former roving ambassador Gustavo Gramont Berres. Following the downfall of the dictatorship it was confirmed that the loan was not guaranteed by the Paraguayan State or by Congress.

Scavone said: "In late March, the Italian Government admitted that the debt had not been legally granted to Paraguay."

This situation virtually paves the way for the Paraguayan Government's plan to reschedule its foreign debt payments with the Paris Club. A Paraguayan delegation will go to the French capital tomorrow to negotiate this alternative. The French Treasury is coordinating the Paris Club's interests. The Paris Club comprises the seven industrial powers, including Italy.

Paraguayan Central Bank official Luis Breuer is in Paris to begin the preliminary negotiations. The negotiations will reportedly be concluded in the presence of Wasmosy.

Our debt with the Paris Club totals about $600 million. Our government's basic idea is to renegotiate $300 million so as to allocate more funds for poor segments by implementing specific projects. [passage omitted]

Peasant Leaders Explain State of Social Unrest

PY0704174894 Madrid EFE in Spanish 0724 GMT 7 Apr 94

[Report by Jorge Benitez]

[Text] Asuncion, 7 Apr (EFE)—Paraguayan peasant organizations have been sustaining a confrontation with the government for the past two months. They warned that the country is risking a class struggle due to the official lack of sensitivity to solving rural problems.

Peasant and executive branch relations had entered a stage of relative calm following President Juan Carlos Wasmosy's decision last month to create the Social Development Council, seeking an open dialogue will all social and economic groups.

Everything indicated that council negotiations were going to end with a final agreement. The signing of the agreement was even announced for 5 April. But that day the Senate approved a government decision blocking the pardoning of a portion of producers' debts to the Agriculture Development Fund (CAH), which angered peasants.

Peasant leaders withdrew from the negotiating table temporarily. However, they later said they considered the position of the executive and legislative branches a joke, adding that in these circumstances they were not willing to agree to anything.

"The Senate decision is an insult to peasants, an attack against them that will deteriorate their situation even more," said Alfonso Cohene of the National Peasants Federation. Cohene added that they cannot pay all their debts because they are being paid too little for their products.

The secretary of the National Peasant Organization (ONAC) based in Coronel Oviedo, in the country's center, believes the executive and legislative branches' attitude is offensive to farmers, adding that it endangers the future of more than 250,000 families dedicated to cotton cultivation.

"It is a dangerous provocation, and the result is obvious because the country is made up of a majority of poor people who are getting increasingly poor and a minority of rich people who are getting increasingly rich," ONAC Secretary Adolfo Ortiz told EFE.

Peasants distrust everyone. They no longer believe in official promises. They can make mistakes if they are pushed against the wall, Ortiz admitted, citing as an example what happened at the beginning of the week in Colony Yby Pe, San Pedro Department, some 300 km north of Asuncion.

On that occasion a group of landless peasants blocked a road and held four Agrarian Reform Institute (IBR) technicians hostage for 24 hours in order to force a meeting with IBR officials.

"If we follow this path we are not too far from violence and class struggle," Ortiz said. The peasant leader announced that national peasant organizations' representatives will meet on 8 April to discuss a strategy to face the derogatory campaign launched by the government against rural demands.

"We have enough reasons to walk away from the negotiating table and resort to new mobilizations. We cannot negotiate for six or seven months. We have concrete problems, and they need urgent solutions," Ortiz stressed.

Thousands of peasants marched on Asuncion on 15 March. It was the largest rural demonstration the country can remember. Peasants protested Wasmosy's economic policies, demanding more land, better prices for their products, and more efficient sanitary and educational assistance.

In the past two months, peasants have blocked several highways in the country's northeast, east, center, and south in support of their demands. They also are holding the largest portion of their cotton production in their farms.

According to official figures, cotton bins have received only 30 percent of the total volume anticipated for the year, despite a 15 percent price increase over what was initially estimated.

Peru

Half Million People Seek Constitutional Amendments

PY0704181094 Madrid EFE in Spanish 0205 GMT 7 Apr 94

[Text] Lima, 6 Apr (EFE)—Today, the Freedom and Democracy Institute of Peru (ILD) submitted a proposal to Congress to amend the 1993 Constitution. The proposal, which was signed by 500,000 people, is based on the people's constitutional right to initiate laws. ILD President Hernando De Soto, who is a former adviser of President Alberto Fujimori, reported that the proposal contains 12 amendments "that seek to make governments listen to the people and to prevent the market economy from becoming a privilege of a few."

One amendment proposes the establishment of a "democratic procedure for popular consultation to decentralize the government's decisionmaking power" so that the executive branch will no longer exclusively make decisions "on every subject without listening to the opinion of the Peruvian people." Other proposed amendments deal with the creation of multiple electoral districts in lieu of the current single district system "so that elected officials may be held directly accountable to their constituents" and to make the constitutional right to cancel terms in office applicable to all political representatives and officials.

De Soto said that during the 5 April 1992 coup, President Fujimori said he took that extreme measure, among other reasons, to democratize political power through a constitutional reform. De Soto contended that Fujimori has not fulfilled his promise because the new Constitution has incorporated "only half" of the changes he promised. Therefore, he said, the ILD has availed itself of the people's right to initiate amendments to the Peruvian Constitution. The Peruvian Constitution recognizes this right of the people, "but only to a certain extent," De Soto said, "because it is the Congress, not the people, that has the power to approve or reject the proposal."

PNP Officers Arrested for Freeing Drug Trafficker

PY0704224894 Lima LA REPUBLICA in Spanish 26 Mar 94 p 14

[Article by Tito Viru Polo]

[Excerpt] Huacho, 25 Mar—Six corrupt Peruvian National Police [PNP] noncommissioned officers who illegally released Clara Chumbe Rondono, aka Aunt Clara—the most sought drug trafficker in the northern region of Lima Department—were imprisoned last night in the Carquin jail located in Carquin. It was reported that the corrupt PNP members received $10,000 for allowing Rondono to go free. Rondono was arrested with 2 kg of highly pure cocaine paste.

It has been learned that two other PNP officers were reportedly involved in this case, but their names will not be disclosed until the investigation that is being conducted is completed and their involvement in this regrettable incident has been clearly established. According to court investigations under way, those arrested are members of the Huaral police delegation, and participated in an antidrug operation conducted in Huaral on 12 December 1993. [passage omitted]

Antidrug Operations Reduced; Helicopters Need Repair

PY0804000394 Lima EL COMERCIO in Spanish 27 Mar 94 p A14

[Text] Of the 10 Bell-212 helicopters donated by the U.S. State Department to the National Police for interdiction operations against drug trafficking in the Peruvian jungle, five are broken down in Pucallpa. National Police sources provided this information. They indicated that antinarcotics operations in the Upper Huallaga as well as in the mountain ranges of the central jungle have been temporarily suspended because of a lack of these helicopters.

Experts in the struggle against drug trafficking said the helicopters are a great help in transporting police personnel, as land transportation is very difficult in the jungle due to ambushes by narcoterrorists. A spokesman for the National Police said that despite this inconvenience, operations are carried out, but not as many.

Roundup of Economic Reports

PY0804012494

[Editorial Report] The following is a compilation of reports on economic activities monitored through 7 April.

The Mercantil Bank has issued commercial papers worth $3 million on the international market. The papers were bought by U.S. investors and financial organizations. This is the first time a Peruvian bank carried out such an operation on a short-term basis. (Lima EXPRESO in Spanish 25 Mar 94 p A35)

On 25 March, representatives of the State Petroleum Agency and Shell signed an agreement designed to conduct studies on the production and marketing of gas in the Camisea reserves, the results of which will be known in May 1995. (Lima LA REPUBLICA in Spanish 26 Mar 94 p 3)

Uruguay

Colonel Blackmails Money Laundering Companies

PY0704181294 Montevideo BRECHA in Spanish 25 Mar 94 p 7

[Article by Samuel Blixen]

[Excerpts] If the promotion to colonel of Tomas Cassella—the intelligence and counterintelligence agent who first protected and then abducted Eugenio Berrios, a former Chilean Dina [National Intelligence Directorate] agent—put the six legislators who approved his promotion in an awkward position, the details of the blackmail case that almost scuttled his promotion are producing more embarrassment to judges and financial authorities.

The misappropriation of accounting information stored in a computer and the lieutenant colonel's persuasive techniques to further increase his income will not be able to compete with the notorious history concealed behind his blackmail. For Cassella, the misappropriated information was worth $500,000. This was his fair price for not disclosing the deposits made by foreigners and the foreign transfers very secretly managed by a banking house through two "covert" companies that, in typical Argentine fashion, acted as "financial caves" for unholy deals.

The blackmail report, filed in a fit of rage by one of the people managing the "covert finance companies," upset the Central Bank authorities who had done nothing despite evvidence of large-scale money laundering that had been discovered after a Social Security Bank [BPS] inspection.

Cassella struck a successful deal. The money launderers' blackmail was based on the two "covert" companies' requirement for secrecy. Cassella figured "it is not a crime to steal from a thief." Thus far, he has been able to

escape court action and, furthermore, be promoted in his professional career. [passage omitted]

A more careful review revealed that the two "covert" companies, Relmon, Inc. and Urafix, Inc., were actually part of an economic team. In a nutshell, they were linked to a banking house established in Buenos Aires and Montevideo. Recently, this banking house has been attempting, unsuccessfully, to obtain a banking license. Behind Relmon and Urafix appeared Exprinter International Corporation [preceding three words in English], the main concern grouping the Exprinter Banking House and the Exprinter Tourism company in Uruguay and linked to the Bunge y Born group and the Deutsche Bank in Argentina. Therefore, the inspectors collected evidence on the existence of "financial caves," a reality that "everyone" but the Central Bank "is aware of." [passage omitted]

A typical Uruguayan solution, at least for this Uruguayan fiscal haven, was implemented. The BPS debt was accepted without a word, to prevent the closing of the banking house and the affiliate companies. The criminal report was withdrawn by the injured people and the judge expressed reasonable doubt on the method to be pursued in this strange case. On 16 March alone, the judge sent the dossier to the prosecutor. The judge, however, sent it to the wrong prosecutor's office. Therefore, court proceedings began last week to determine the actions to be taken on the blackmail report, as this is a crime that is being officially (that is, beyond the injured people's will) investigated when the injured people strongly recant.

After this stormy summer season ended, Lt. Col. Cassella was promoted to colonel. It was not reported if he finally managed to collect the $500,000, but his representatives claim they reached a "settlement between the parties."

The measures taken by the Central Bank, which is supposed to control financial activities, also were not reported. The BPS inspection and the blackmail episode exposed the money laundering operations in Relmon and Urafix. The money launderers will consider that Montevideo no longer represents a safe center because the "controls" that the state does not implement actually are implemented by the personal initiative of gangs of blackmailers dressed in uniform. It is no longer possible to trust anything.

Industry Minister Fires General Director

PY0704172194 Montevideo EL OBSERVADOR ECONOMICO in Spanish 28 Mar 94 p 7

[Text] Industry Minister Eduardo Ache on 25 March fired Industry General Director Andres Merino Pacheco because he said he would resign if the government approved last week's gasoline price increase. Sources close to Merino Pacheco told EL OBSERVADOR that he sought to obtain "political profit" inside his faction and this annoyed Minister Ache.

Merino Pacheco is a nephew of Jorge Pacheco Areco, Colorado Party and Bettleist Union leader. He was also one of former Industry Minister Carlos Piran's trusted men during the previous government. Merino Pacheco will be replaced by current Deputy Secretary General Santiago Urioste, of the Herreraist faction [National Party faction].

Roundup of Economic Reports

PY0804020294

[Editorial Report] The following is a compilation of reports on economic activities monitored through 7 April.

Export earnings derived from the marketing of 120,359 tonnes of meat, sausages, offal, and by-products totalled $218.3 million in 1993. Even though the volume exported was down 13.7 percent compared with the previous year, the price per tonne was up by 1.9 percent totaling $1,814. Beef exports, which account for 10.2 percent of Uruguay's exports, totaled $156.2 million, thus registering a 14.1 percent decline. The leading importers of Uruguayan beef are the UK, Chile, Germany, Israel, Brazil, and Japan, which purchase 62.7 percent of total meat exports. (Montevideo EL PAIS in Spanish 22 Mar 94 Market Indicators Section p 1)

A study done by the Planning and Budget Office and funded by the United Nations Development Program reveals that the level of poverty in Uruguay has considerably declined over the last eight years. It fell 40 percent in Montevideo from 1984-92, and 20 percent in the cities of the interior. The study notes that Uruguay has the lowest level of poverty in Latin America. (Montevideo BUSQUEDA in Spanish 24 Mar 94 p 31)

The government registered a surplus totaling 85.8 million pesos, some $19.2 million, in January, thus reversing the negative results of the previous eight months. Despite this positive figure, the fiscal situation continues to show signs of deterioration due to the continued increase in government spending, which was up 25 percent in January compared with the same month in 1993, and the decrease in tax revenues, which declined 7 percent in the same month. Public investment in January surged 36.5 percent. (Montevideo EL PAIS in Spanish 29 Mar 94 Market Indicators Section p 1)

Wholesale prices rose 3 percent in March, thus registering a 32 percent increase over the last 12 months and an accrued increase of 7.1 percent in the first quarter of this year. Agricultural products were up by nearly 10 percent; livestock products by 4.0 percent; fishing products by 0.5 percent; and manufactured goods by 2.1 percent. (Montevideo EL PAIS in Spanish 31 Mar 94 Market Indicators Section p 1)

Venezuela

Foreign Ministry Communique on U.S. Drug Report

PA0804040994 Caracas EL NACIONAL in Spanish 7 Apr 94 p A-2

[Communique issued by the Foreign Ministry in Caracas on 6 April]

[Text] Given the distorted reports transmitted by certain foreign news agencies and subsequently published in a local newspaper on 5 April on the "Annual Report on the Drug Control Strategy at the International Level" presented by the U.S. State Department to the U.S. Congress, which lists Venezuela among the leading drug producing countries and countries used most often as transshipment points for drugs, the Foreign Ministry has done an in- depth evaluation of the aforementioned report and states the following:

1. The report and list refer to countries, Venezuela included, that are victims of the drug problem and which have cooperated fully with the United States or adopted their own measures to achieve full compliance with the goals and objectives of the 1988 UN Convention Against the Illegal Traffic of Narcotics and Psychotropic Substances. The preparation of the aforementioned report is foreseen in the U.S. Foreign Aid Law and allows a confirmation of the various categories of countries affected by the drug problem that may continue to receive U.S. aid.

2. As the report indicates, Venezuela is one of the countries that has offered exemplary cooperation in the struggle against drugs. The U.S. State Department recognizes this when it admits that "Venezuela is not a narcotics producing country; it is only used as a transshipment point for drugs going from Colombia to the United States and Europe." This categorically denies the negative reports spread by certain biased foreign news agencies that included only certain parts of the report in question.

3. Moreover, the U.S. Government recognizes the efforts made by Venezuela, a country that has endorsed the 1988 UN Convention Against the Illegal Traffic of Narcotics and Psychotropic Substances that was ratified in 1991. Furthermore, our country has signed 23 bilateral agreements that include most of Latin America, the Caribbean, and North America as well as several Western European countries in coordinated efforts and policies for the prevention, control, and repression of the illegal traffic of narcotics and psychotropic substances. In addition, on a multilateral level, Venezuela is part of the 1961 Single Narcotics Convention, the 1971 protocol which modifies this convention, the South American Accord on Narcotics and Psychotropic Substances (ASEP), and the Lara Bonilla Accord among Cartagena Agreement member countries. It is also actively working on programs of the Inter-American Commission for the Control of Drug Abuse (CICAD/OAS).

4. Likewise, Venezuela is among the pioneer Latin American countries which promulgated the 1984 Basic Law on Narcotics and Psychotropic Substances, which was revised in 1993 to include almost all the Model Regulations for the Control of Precursors and Chemical Substances, Machines, and Elements prepared by the CICAD. Moreover, the current law on this issue was adapted to the terms of the 1988 Vienna Convention.

5. Within this same context, and as acknowledged by the U.S. State Department report, the Venezuelan Government's struggle against the illegal traffic of drugs has been permanent and systematic. Referring to this issue, measures have been taken to equip the state's security organizations, and special financial investigation divisions have been created in the Technical Judicial Police (PTJ), Directorate of Intelligence and Prevention Services (DISIP), and the Armed Forces of National Cooperation.

6. In addition, seminars and conferences have been held in Caracas this year to examine the drug problem, including the one recently held by the CICAD on the "Use of Capital Resulting From the Illegal Traffic of Drugs," and the first Latin American Congress of Drug Experts, under the auspices of the U.S. Embassy and the Jose Felix Ribas Foundation. Furthermore, the country was visited by the executive secretary and assistant secretary of the International Narcotics Supervision Board (JIFE) on 21-25 March for a firsthand look at the drug situation in Venezuela. Those individuals expressed their recognition of the work being done in this country.

7. As proof of the permanent struggle against that scourge, the state's security organizations seized 3,405,197 kg of drugs in 1993: cocaine (1,704,883 kg); bazuko (1,160,898 kg); marijuana (526.26 kg), heroin (12,686 kg), and hashish (0.500 kg). Moreover, 12,309 people were arrested as a result of those seizures and Police operations; and charges were filed for drug consumption (10), drug possession (9,931), and drug trafficking (2,368).

8. To conclude, the Venezuela Government wishes to reassert its firm decision to continue the struggle against drugs, and it avails itself of the occasion to request the same cooperation from the other countries of the international community, particularly the government of the United States of America, a country with which we have excellent relations of friendship and cooperation. Venezuela is not a drug producer but it is suffering the consequences of the illegal trafficking of narcotics and psychotropic substances, particularly the laundering of dollars generated by drug trafficking activities. It is time to face the problem together, not through a misrepresentation of the facts or slanderous charges, but with serious efforts focused on strengthening the actions against this terrible scourge.

Armed Forces Postpone Social Welfare Program

PA0804004294 Caracas EL GLOBO in Spanish 4 Apr 94 p 2

[Text] Yesterday, a Fort Tiuna spokesman announced that the implementation of a three-part financial Armed Forces Welfare and Social Securuty Global Plan, designed to improve the military's standard of living, had been suspended because of budget shortfalls. As is already known, the Global Plan was formulated by the Defense Ministry a few months after the unfortunate 4 February and 27 November 1992 incidents. The objective of this plan was—and continues to be—to improve the military's standard of living, enhance benefit quality, strengthen the programs that would finance the plan, and widen the coverage and design new programs to protect the entire FAN [National Armed Forces] population. These specific objectives, however, according to the military source, will not be implemented because of the serious fiscal deficit that is hampering the Armed Forces' capital requirements.

During the administration of then Defense Minister General Ivan Dario Jimenez Sanchez, the plan was encouraged in order to meet the general objective of offering welfare and security to FAN military and civilian personnel. The plan itself was designed by taking into account issues like health, housing, recreation, socioeconomic support, social security, sports, education, and culture and to include other related issues that would ensure as many "benefits as possible" to all FAN personnel. At any rate, under the administration of Gen. Angel Rafael Montero Revette it has become necessary to reschedule the plan. The fiscal deficit would seem to be the stumbling block to welfare and social security benefits since it unfortunately hampers several of the programs which had been allocated until 1995, the date selected to implement the plan.

The Defense Ministry spokesman indicated that after analyzing the socioeconomic situation of military personnel, including those civilians working for the military, it was concluded that the FAN personnel's social securuty and welfare in general is inadequate. This is especially true in health care, housing, and recreation, where there is a need for more money. In principle, the plan stipulated the need for 18 billion bolivares. This amount would be divided as follows: 37 percent to health issues, 40 percent to housing, and 9 percent to recreation. On the other hand, the plan would be divided into three parts based on how it would be financed: A Global Investment Plan to be implemented by means of additional financial investments procured through a Public Credit Law and a contingency budget prompted by the aforementioned Investment Plan, the financing of which would be done through ordinary budget stipulations. In addition, financially quantifiable measures are clearly needed in order to reinforce decisions made in the two previous plans.

The military spokesman concludes by indicating that the strategies of the Global Plan, which have so far been more theoretical than practical, are aimed at achieving the implementation of the welfare and social security system, accomplishing and consolidating the development of social policies through legal, institutional, and financial mechanisms and procedures in order to provide administrative consistency and coherence to the social programs. It also seeks to encourage the active participation of all social sectors, draft systematic and balanced programs to continuously improve health care, housing, education, culture and recreation, sports, social welfare, as well as socioeconomic support.

Former Minister Examines Possibility of Coup

PA0704231594 Caracas EL DIARIO DE CARACAS in Spanish 2 Apr 94 p 3

[Article by General Fernando Ochoa Antich, Venezuela's former defense and foreign minister: "The Coup d'Etat"]

[Text] I read Hilarion Cardozo's statements with great interest, not only because of their striking content but because he has always accurately interpreted the Venezuelan military's thinking and feelings. His position is clear. He says there are three groups in the Armed Forces. The first one, described as conservative, will follow ideas similar to the ones endorsed by the 27 November coup leaders and which are close to economic right-wing groups. Another one is located, as far as I understand, in the organization's middle ranks and has progressive tendencies. It maintains contacts with radical groups in our political sector. A third group prefers to give the Caldera government the military strength to face the current crisis. Cardozo is right. Three groups exist and have existed in the Armed Forces since 1958.

We recall the initial efforts of Rodolfo Jose Cardenas, the right-wing trend of the conspiracy against Luis Herrera, and the first basis of military support for Romulo Betancourt when he decided to put a stop to leftist congressmen of the era following the Encanto train attack. I believe it is necessary to clairfy Cardozo's proposal. Two groups have always existed in the Armed Forces, united by a national feeling: one, a majority devoid of political passion, which carries out its professional military job, and the other, which thinks the Armed Forces is the path to power.

What Cardozo failed to explain in his statement is that the politically-influenced group requires sufficient social deterioration to convince the majority of the Armed Forces of the need for a coup d'etat. Without those special conditions existing in the country, a coup simply would fail and would not be more than a coffee shop conspiracy. President Caldera and his government have sufficient political experience to prevent the forming of support around the minority group that might stage such a coup d'etat. I am certain of that. What does concern me is the vast popular unrest that exists against the leadership sectors for maintaining excessive privileges and

unbridled ambitions. We Venezuelans blame that leadership for the misguided administration of the country. Until 1970, we had faith in creating a modern, developed, and different society. Expectations ended in utter failure and frustration. That perception permeated the Armed Forces and was the cause of the 4 February and 27 November coups. The prospect that Rafael Caldera would come to power, with all his moral authority and abilities, calmed the country during those historic moments and again created new confidence in the Armed Forces. That is the true origin of the existing institutional stability.

Certainly, Rafael Caldera must reestablish a national consensus to avert a coup d'etat. Hilarion Cardozo is clear on this, but he does not interpret or say this consensus can only be secured by achieving profound national change. That is the government's dilemma. If it does not face the existing political, financial, labor, and judicial state of affairs and continues with sweeping reforms, popular resentment will again infiltrate the Armed Forces' ranks, creating the climate for a coup d'etat—hence the real fear of Hilarion Cardozo and traditional party leaderships. They know the first obligation of a politician, moreso if he is a chief of state, is to preserve power. What will Rafael Caldera do if he feels that the very basis of his government is threatened? Will he permit a climate for conspiracy or, on the other hand, will he prefer to lead the national resentment, conducting the big changes required by the country? Only time will tell.

Coupists Return From Peru, Seek Accord Compliance

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[Report by Berenice Gomez Velasquez]

[Text] Most of the servicemen who have returned from Peru have voiced their disappointment and puzzlement because the pledges made to them have not been kept. They are anxious to know their immediate fate since reality is very different from what they were promised.

Lawyer Virginia Contreras has briefed the local press at length on this situation on behalf of her clients. The servicemen wish to resume their military careers, but they feel a public statement constitutes another matter. Unofficially, the servicemen indicated that when they were in Lima an agreement was signed "and now nobody knows where it is," so that the idea is to ignore the terms of the agreement. They specifically agreed that in order to have the charges against them dropped, they only needed to return to the country. Now they are also being told to give statements accompanied by their defense lawyers, something that was not planned.

Hugo Chavez' release proved to them that there is no need to testify to have the charges dropped. He did not appear with the law, did not read the records of the proceedings, and did not even appear before a judge, maintained an attitude of contempt of court, and was always making statements.

To be pardoned, an arrest warrant should have been issued. Is the president dropping the charges based on privileges of rank? Is this hierarchical discrimination?

They protest the demand of prior request for discharge because it is not legal and because they wish to return to the Venezuelan Armed Forces. They charge that the authorities request they limit themselves to appointing counsel for the defense who would allow their defendants to request a discharge.

The officers regret the noncompliance of their commander in chief, who had promised to drop charges once he gained power. They question why they are told "the forces do not want them," when that statement can only be made by the High Command, the majority of whom were detained or confined by the coupists who were obeying superior orders.

Guyana

Roundup of President Jagan's Visit to Colombia

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[Editorial Report] The following is a roundup of press agency reporting on President Cheddi Jagan's visit to Colombia.

On 4 April, Colombian President Cesar Gaviria met with his Guyanese counterpart Cheddi Jagan with whom he reviewed bilateral relations. Jagan is on a three-day official visit aimed at strengthening economic, commercial, and political ties between the two countries. The Colombian president said trade, tourism, and ecology are some areas of interest. (Madrid EFE in Spanish 0156 GMT 5 April 94)

Today, Colombian and Guyanese Presidents Cesar Gaviria and Cheddi Jagan pledged to support an initiative to create an Association of Caribbean States as a broad mechanism through which countries in that area can agree on commercial integration policies. The commitment was announced in a joint declaration signed by the two presidents at the end of Jagan's official visit to Colombia. The presidents said the initiative proposed by the Caribbean Common Market (Caricom) will facilitate the creation of a free trade zone. In that regard, Gaviria recalled that one of the main objectives of the Group of Three (Colombia, Mexico, and Venezuela) is increasing cooperation with Central American and Caribbean countries. Gaviria and Jagan agreed to strengthen bilateral relations and encourage integration in commerce, health, agriculture, education, electricity, and tourism. (Hamburg DPA in Spanish 1800 GMT 5 April 94)

Guyanese President Cheddi Jagan, who concluded his official visit to Colombia on 5 April, said at a news conference that his country "is alarmed by the growing

threat of drug trafficking, particularly cocaine shipments sent to Guyana from Colombia through Venezuela." He added that in confronting this problem, his government will sign cooperation agreements against drug trafficking with the United States, Great Britain, and Colombia. Commenting on Colombian President Cesar Gaviria's election as OAS secretary general, he expresssed his confidence that his efforts as head of the regional organization will be of great value. He said his visit to Colombia will strengthen bilateral trade relations and invited Colombian businessmen to invest in his country. (Paris AFP in Spanish 2200 GMT 5 April 94)